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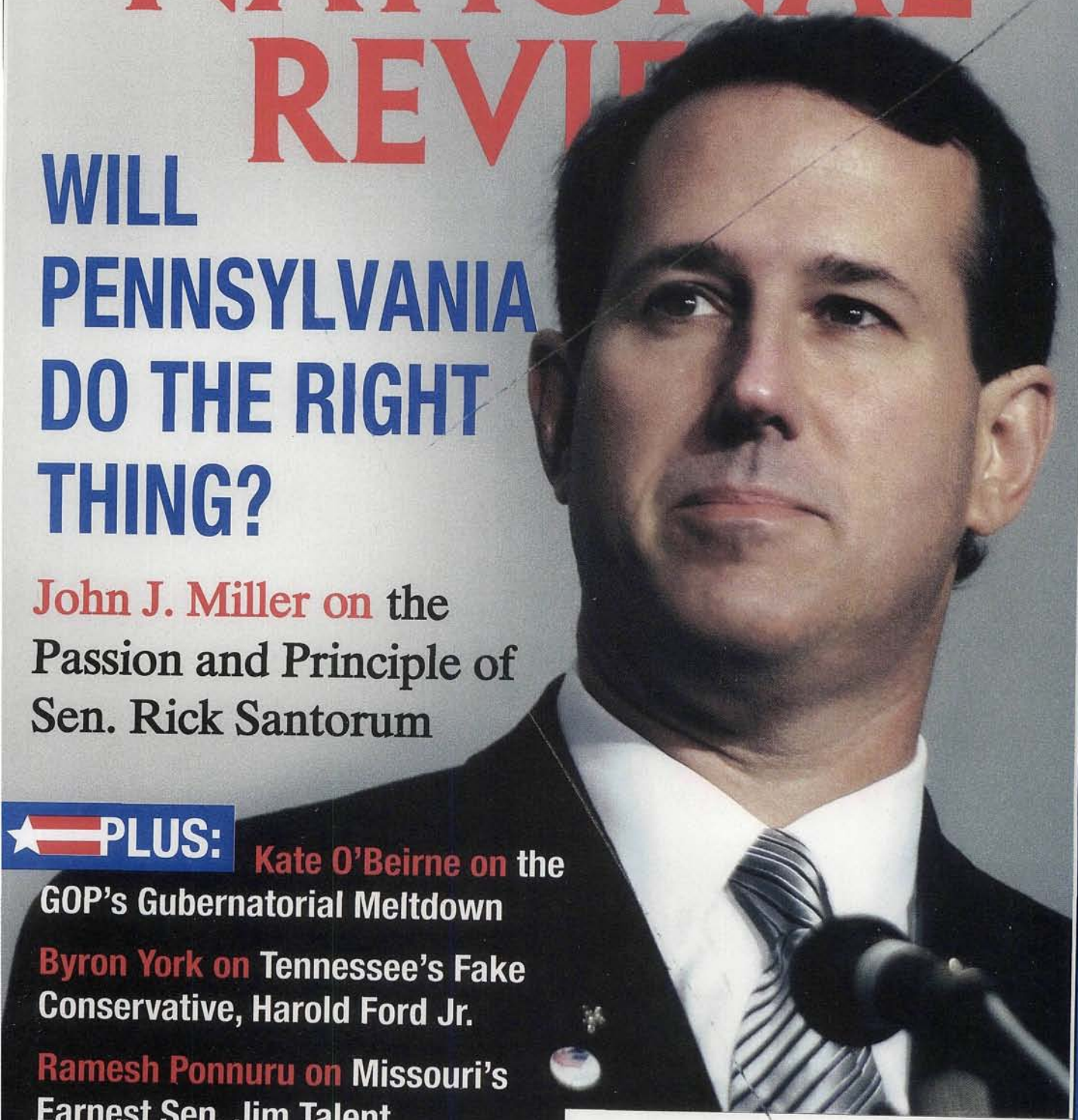
ELECTION ISSUE

NATIONAL REVIEW

WILL PENNSYLVANIA DO THE RIGHT THING?

John J. Miller on the Passion and Principle of Sen. Rick Santorum



PLUS:

Kate O'Beirne on the GOP's Gubernatorial Meltdown

Byron York on Tennessee's Fake Conservative, Harold Ford Jr.

Ramesh Ponnuru on Missouri's Earnest Sen. Jim Talent

Stephen Spruiell on the Lunacy of MSNBC's Keith Olbermann

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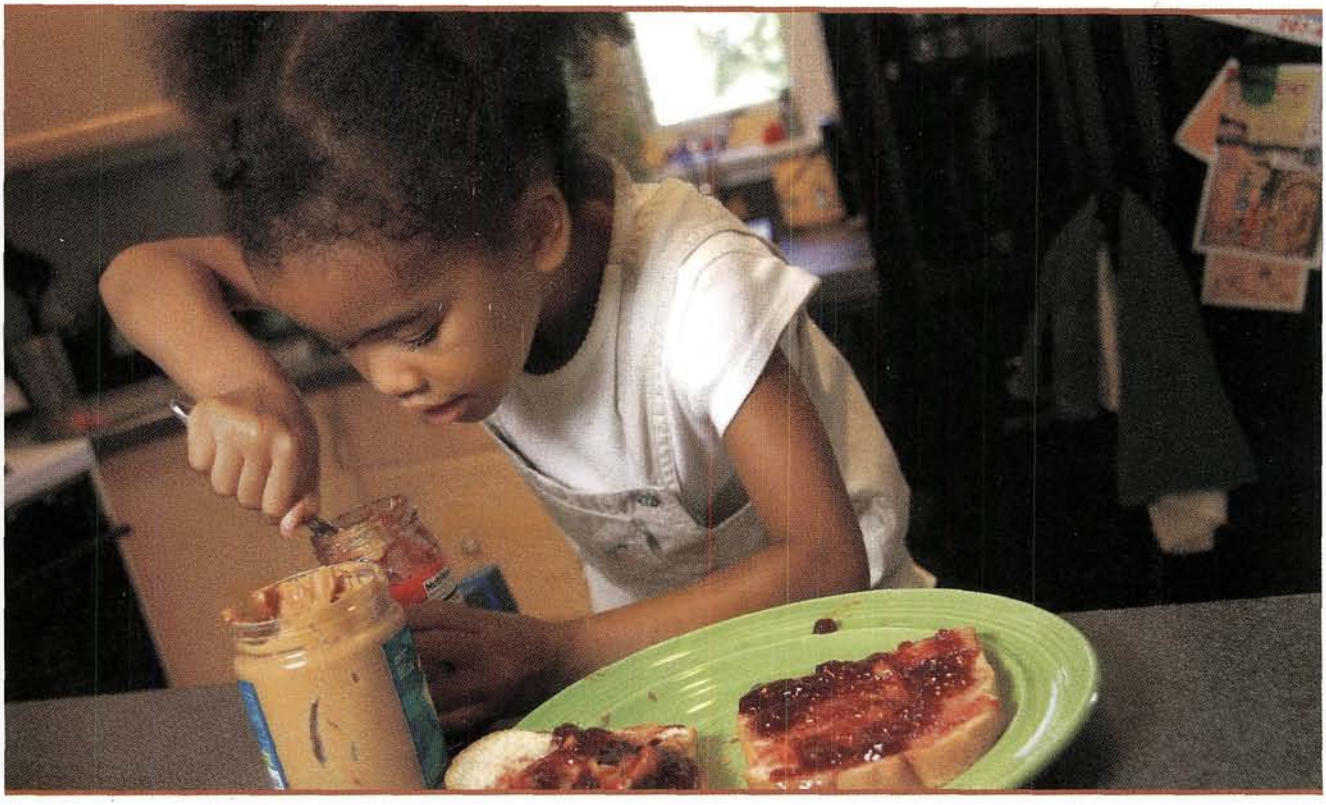

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NATIONAL REVIEW

NOVEMBER 6, 2006 VOL. LVIII, NO. 20

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■ COVER STORY

The Fate of Rick

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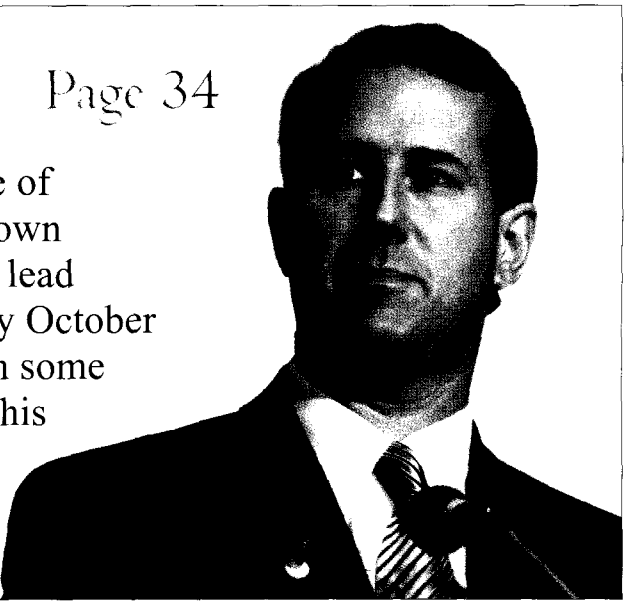
Sen. Rick Santorum is embroiled in the race of his life: For more than a year, polls have shown challenger Bob Casey Jr. holding a sizeable lead over the incumbent. A Zogby survey in early October showed Casey ahead by 12 points. Although some signs suggest Santorum is starting to close this wide gap, the senator is clearly frustrated by his struggle to overtake a Democrat he doesn't respect. *By John J. Miller*



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letters to the editor

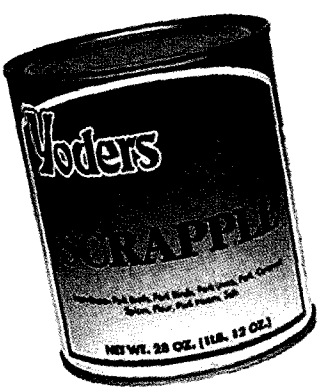
GRITS, MAYBE, BUT . . .

Like many who identify themselves as proud southerners, Dave Shiflett ("A Wider View," Sept. 21) is guilty of claiming southern provenance for that which originated elsewhere. Shiflett's most egregious misappropriation is his inclusion of scrapple in his pantheon of southern delicacies. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Scrapple, a mixture of pork scraps, cornmeal, flour, and spices, came out of the Pennsylvania Dutch countryside (perhaps via Germany), and was first commercially produced by slaughterhouses in Philadelphia. Even today scrapple is difficult to find in most areas of the South. In Richmond, one can find scrapple in some of the larger supermarket chains, such as the Ohio-based Kroger, but most Richmond-area eateries do not carry it on their menus.

As a scrapple connoisseur, I do agree with Shiflett's description of the "transubstantiation" that comes with eating this unrivaled delicacy, but I cannot in good conscience allow him to claim this as a southern ritual.

Eric A. Ruark
College Park, Md.



FROM SINAI THUNDERETH WHAT?

Cathy Seipp's review of the book on Charlton Heston (Oct. 23) does a fine job demonstrating the difficulty of calling Moses a neocon. Yet her suggestion that Heston was more aligned with libertarian thought suffers from a problem. She writes, "[Hollywood liberals] know that libertarians are for legalized drugs, and against any criticism of bad language or sex in the Hollywood product, so . . . great!"

Heston took a strong position on "bad language . . . in the Hollywood product" with his pointed criticism of companies that produce and distribute rap music encouraging cop-killing. I'm not sure where Heston might have placed himself on the political spectrum, but slotting him as a libertarian doesn't work. At various times in his career, he was a civil-rights activist, a gun-control advocate (right after the assassination of Robert Kennedy), an opponent of abortion, and a board member of Accuracy in Media (the conservative media-watchdog organization).

Clayton E. Cramer
Horseshoe Bend, Idaho

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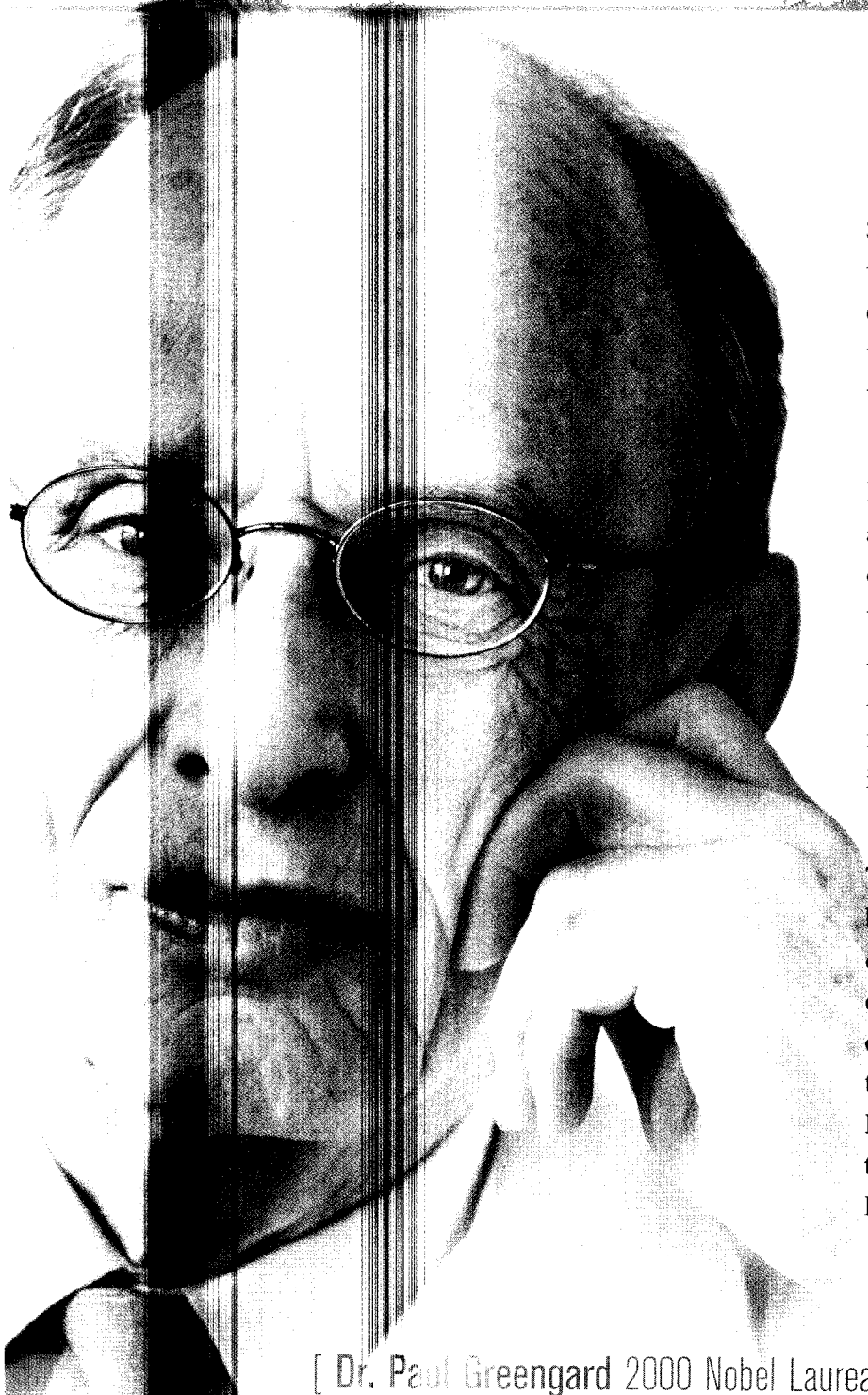

Some say depression is all in your head. Well, that's right. And wrong. It's right because depression is in the head, or more precisely, the brain. In fact, we've seen how it destroys the connections between brain cells.

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[Dr. Paul Greengard 2000 Nobel Laureate in Medicine]

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THE WEEK

■ Lest you doubt that Hillary is running in '08, she's now wearing a cross. What's she going to do next, bake cookies?

■ Washington is alive with speculation about what the James Baker/Lee Hamilton Iraq Study Group will recommend after the election. The leaks and statements from Baker aren't encouraging. There is a suggestion that we would de-emphasize the democracy agenda in Iraq. But it's not clear what that could possibly mean at this juncture, after we have already established a democratically elected government under a democratically endorsed constitution. Baker has talked of the desirability of talking with our enemies, specifically Iran and Syria. There is nothing wrong with talking to an enemy—Reagan did this—if there is some hope of achieving something from it. It's doubtful, however, that Iran and Syria are going to become any more supportive of an American ally in their midst merely through our buttering them up with some "dialogue." Meanwhile, the most important question in Iraq is whether Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki has the will to crack down on the Shiite militias that are one of the main forces making Iraq ungovernable and driving it toward full-blown civil war. He gives mixed signals, although the removal of two death-squad-tainted senior police commanders is encouraging. We have to keep the pressure on him, and should consider forging a series of deadlines for Iraqi performance of the sort that guided Iraq through the political process in the first three years after the invasion. We shouldn't have unrealistic expectations of Maliki, but neither can we look the other way as he dithers, or worse, accommodates some of the worst political actors in the country.

■ Former Virginia governor Mark Warner has taken himself out of the running for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2008. He had spent months on the road raising money and testing his moderate message. You can see why he thought he had a chance: In the past 40 years only moderate southern governors have won the White House for the Democrats. But Warner's candidacy didn't take off. The passion, cash, and clout in the Democratic party is with angry activists who condemn all centrism and any perceived centrist. Just ask Joe Lieberman.

■ The more we have learned about the Mark Foley scandal, the more we have been confirmed in our initial conclusion: Republicans on the Hill were negligent in following up on complaints about Foley, but they did not engage in any cover-up. We would have preferred that Republican leaders, starting with Speaker Denny Hastert, be more forthright in admitting mistakes. But the suggestion by Democrats that the Republicans are soft on pedophiles is outrageous, and arousing justified indignation.

Al Franken, post-bankruptcy? *(See page 6.)*

ROMAN GENN

■ Voters haven't elected a Republican in Minnesota's Fifth Congressional District since before the current Democratic nominee, 43-year-old Keith Ellison, was born. In all likelihood, they will extend this tradition on November 7 and make Ellison—who has also gone by the names Keith Hakim, Keith X. Ellison, and Keith Ellison Muhammad—the first Muslim to hold a seat in Congress. A convert from Catholicism who has served in the Minnesota legislature, Ellison is at first glance a standard-issue liberal: He calls for the immediate withdrawal of troops from Iraq, national health care, abortion rights, protectionism, "environmental justice," and so on. Republican bloggers have highlighted his ties to Louis Farrakhan, the anti-Semitic leader of the Nation of Islam: Ellison helped organize the Million Man March in 1995 and defended Farrakhan in newspaper columns he wrote as a law student in the late 1980s. In May, Ellison assured Jewish leaders that he now believes Farrakhan's rhetoric to be "anti-Semitic, and I should have come to that conclusion earlier than I did." Perhaps Ellison deserves forgiveness for these indiscretions, which he plainly acknowledges. In the future, however, he should be expected to step forward and condemn extremism when it surfaces among his coreligionists.

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THE WEEK...

■ Teddy Kennedy went to Connecticut to campaign against Rep. Christopher Shays. Shays's opponent had called on Speaker Dennis Hastert to step down while the Foley affair was being investigated, and Shays had finally had it. "I know the Speaker didn't go over a bridge and leave a young person in the water, and then have a press conference the next day. Dennis Hastert didn't kill anybody." Insert appropriate tut-tuts. But . . . Teddy Kennedy will stay in office until he feels the pangs of senectitude. Then he will retire to endless fêtes, and a *Time* essay by Arthur Schlesinger Jr. The Capitol and the Bunker Hill Monument will be renamed for him. Along the way he will pass whatever judgments of Republicans his staff composes and puts in front of him. We should not devote our days to rehashing his record—that would make the time pass very heavily indeed. Still, it's nice to hear the truth, every decade or so.

■ David Kuo worked on President Bush's faith-based initiative for the White House. Now he is disillusioned. In a new book, he says that the president didn't fight hard enough for the initiative, or give it enough money; the administration spent its energy on tax cuts for high earners. Members of the White House staff, whom Kuo does not name, disparaged some evangelical leaders, calling them "nuts" and "goofy." The administration used the initiative to curry favor with those leaders. The liberal press is treating Kuo's complaints as revelations. But there is nothing especially shocking here. The president was right to place a higher priority on tax cuts than on the faith-based initiative. Some evangelical political leaders *are* nuts, as are some figures in other parts of the political and religious worlds. Every administration pushes its policies in part to please voting blocs who favor those policies. To act as though these inevitable features of political life constituted some kind of scandal is a little, well, goofy.

■ What? So liberal talk radio isn't a big success, after all? After one of the splashiest rollouts in history, aided by loyal fans at the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, it appears that Air America, the Left's answer to Rush, Sean, Laura, and the conservative radio juggernaut, is kaput. Or nearly kaput. The radio network declared bankruptcy on Friday, the 13th of October, saying it has lost more than $40 million since its debut in March 2004. As do many bankrupt enterprises, Air America pledged to keep going while it reorganized itself, but there's no telling how long that will be. Now, there are several theories as to why the network went bust. Some say liberals already have all the radio they need, what with National Public Radio. Others say Air America's personalities just aren't very good. Still others say the company's business model was terrible from the get-go. All of that is true, but we like the analysis of Rush Limbaugh, who knows a little bit about radio success. "They were not a broadcasting concern to begin with," Rush told his listeners. "They went into business to affect elections." Air America never knew the difference between being a business and being a Democratic 527. R.I.P.

■ Markos Moulitsas, the genius behind the left-wing website Daily Kos, has bigger plans. According to a profile in *Wired*, he wants to found a chain of "democracy centers" and "cultural outposts" that would "replicat[e] megachurches for the left." They would offer child care, cafés, and a "vast left-wing conspiracy component" of leadership training and progressive discussion groups. Well. The reason megachurches got mega is that they say we are sinners, yet God loves us anyway. This is a little deeper than impeaching Bush, or even global warming. No Good News, no big crowds. And considering the often vulgar hymnody of modern evangelicalism, we can't wait to hear what the Kossacks will sing. "*Art* after *Art* goes out, and all is Night."

■ People remember Alan Greenspan's warning about "irrational exuberance" on Wall Street. They forget that when he issued that warning, in 1996, the Dow was at 6,437. Even during the worst of the bear market that came a few years later, it never sank that low. And now it is at record levels, closing in on 12,000. The market's strength reflects sound policy: The long fight against inflation has paid off, and so have President Bush's tax cuts on investment. But above all, it reflects the power of America's private sector. In the long run, the safe bet in America is with the bulls.

■ Adam Yahiye Gadahn, a 28-year-old Californian, was a pacifist when he converted to Islam in the mid-1990s. Now he belongs to al-Qaeda, and is the star of Osama bin Laden's propaganda videos. For that, he has received a richly deserved treason indictment, and could face the death penalty if convicted. But the charges against him are especially hard for the government to prove. As in all treason cases, it must produce two witnesses who can testify in detail about the accused's cooperation with the enemy; the last conviction was in 1952. The difficulties are compounded by the fact that Gadahn's whereabouts are unknown. (He is thought to be in Pakistan.) Let us hope that in due course he finds himself face to face with American soldiers capable of dispensing a swifter and more efficient justice.

■ Mexico sent a diplomatic note to the State Department to formally protest Congress's plan to build a 700-mile fence along our southern border. Outgoing president Vicente Fox, who has spent his last six years in office pleading for amnesty for the 12 million illegals currently in the U.S., called the proposed barrier "shameful" and compared it to the Berlin Wall. President-elect Felipe Calderón concurred. He said we "could stop more migrants with a kilometer of new roads and development than with a wall." We think that's a fine idea, Señor Presidente. We're all for the development of Mexico and its economy, which cries out for free-market reforms. *¡Sí, se puede!* But until you get your act together, and staunch the flow of migrants, we'll take our wall.

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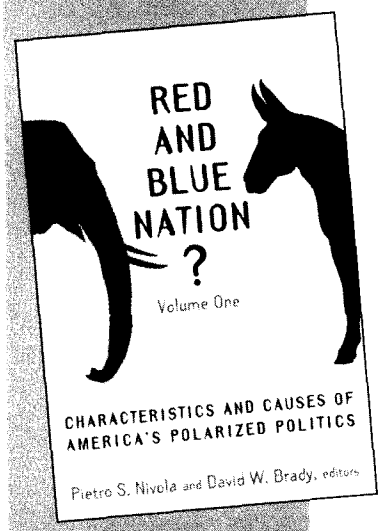
Red and Blue Nation?

Characteristics and Causes of America's Polarized Politics

EDITED BY PIETRO S. NIVOLA AND DAVID W. BRADY



Analysts and pundits increasingly perceive a widening gulf between "red states" and "blue states." Yet the research to support that perception is scattered and sometimes difficult to parse. America's polarized politics, it is said, poses fundamental dangers for democratic and accountable government. Heightened partisanship is thought to degrade deliberation in Congress and threaten the integrity of other institutions, from the courts to the media. But how deep do the country's political divisions actually run? Are they truly wreaking havoc upon the social fabric? Has America become a house divided? This important new book, *Red and Blue Nation?* gets to the bottom of this perplexing issue.

The first of two volumes cosponsored by Brookings and the Hoover Institution carefully considers the extent to which polarized views among political leaders and activists are reflected in the population at large.

In *Red and Blue Nation?* leading journalists and scholars combine their different insights to enrich our understanding of the issue, offering thoughtful analyses of the underlying problems. This comprehensive and accessible discussion of the polarization debate will be an essential resource for policymakers, scholars, and anyone interested in the health of American public discourse.

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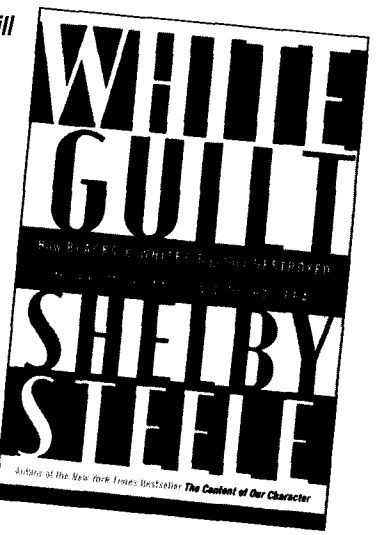

In 1955 the murderers of Emmett Till, a black Mississippi youth, were acquitted of their crime, undoubtedly because they were white. Forty years later, O. J. Simpson, whom many thought would be found guilty of murder by virtue of the DNA evidence against him, went free after his attorney portrayed him as a victim of racism. Clearly, a sea change has taken place in American culture, but how did it happen? In this important new work, distinguished race relations scholar Shelby Steele argues that the age of white supremacy has given way to an age of white guilt—and neither that has been good for African Americans.

Shelby Steele is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

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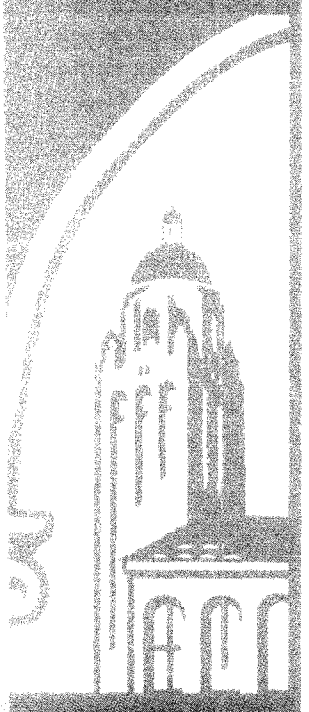

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The Week...

■ Anna Politkovskaya was probably the most famous investigative journalist in Russia. Born in New York as the child of Soviet diplomats, she spoke fluent English and had dual Russian-American citizenship. She covered the Russian struggle with the Chechens for *Novaya Gazeta*, one of the few surviving outlets of free speech. Russian soldiers and police, she reported in its columns and in best-selling books, move around Chechnya in a state of complete moral decay, torturing, kidnapping, indulging in mass executions, ransoming corpses back to the locals for burial. Under her signature, she blamed President Putin for his cynicism, racism, and lying. "Taking a risk comes with the job," she once told an audience as she was accepting one of the several awards her journalism received. Indeed it does. A hit man waited in her apartment block in Moscow, and shot her dead in the elevator. Although the killer left his gun behind and was also filmed on closed-circuit television, there is almost no chance that he will be identified and arrested. Ominously, the Kremlin had no immediate comment, even though Mikhail Gorbachev was moved to speak of "a savage crime." Politkovskaya is the 13th journalist to be taken out in brutal manner during Putin's term in office. Is the shadow of Stalin once more rising over that stricken country?

■ After nine years in the wilderness of opposition, there are no signposts to tell the British Conservative party how to find the road back to power. They have a new young leader in David Cameron, who looks and acts a bit like Tony Blair in his successful prime, and evidently intends to position himself accordingly. That means taking his distance from Thatcherism, criticizing that whole legacy, swearing that he is a liberal conservative and not one of the dreaded neocons. He chose 9/11, of all days, to announce, "We should be solid but not slavish in

Where Clinton Beats W.

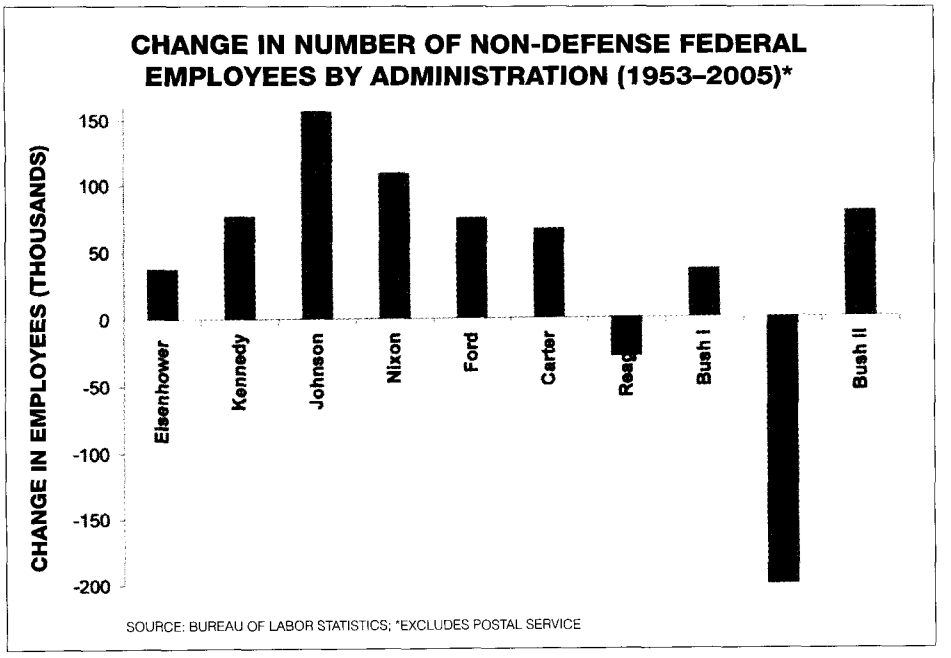
While private businesses rise and fall depending on the quality of their products, government workers can slog away in their cubicles without ever confronting competitive pressure. This makes a government job one of the most secure positions in the universe. The numbers are striking. The median tenure for federal employees is 9.9 years, compared with 3.6 years in the private sector.

Because of this, one of the most important measures of the size of our government is based on a simple head count. Since government workers stay put so long, their numbers add up to a massive debt owed by future taxpayers. Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day. Give him a government job and he can take your fish for a lifetime.

On the campaign trail, politicians always pay lip service to the ideal of small government. But if you look at how past presidents have delivered on this ideal, the data tell a surprising story.

The accompanying chart presents the change in the number of non-defense federal employees under each administration dating back to Eisenhower. Only two presidents, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton, have successfully tamed the tendency toward bureaucratic bloating. During Reagan's tenure, the number of federal employees decreased by 29,000—a 2 percent drop. During Clinton's reign, the number of federal jobs plunged by 200,000—a stunning 13 percent slash.

All the others have presided over a steady expansion in the size of government. President George W. Bush has seen the number of government employees surge by a whopping 79,000. This is the highest increase of any president since 1953, except Richard Nixon and Lyndon Johnson. And in Bush's remaining years, he may yet surpass Nixon for the silver medal. (Passing Johnson seems impossible, even for this president.)



Readers of NR understand how and why Reagan cut federal jobs, but what about Clinton? The story is not as rosy as it might seem. While Clinton did work hard to "reinvent government," his employee reduction doesn't tell the whole story. It omits the millions of government contractors whom his administration employed. So it makes for fine window dressing, but wasn't as sharp a reduction in the size of government as it appears. Nonetheless, strange as it sounds, Clinton's record in this particular area is exemplary next to Bush's.

—KEVIN A. HASSETT

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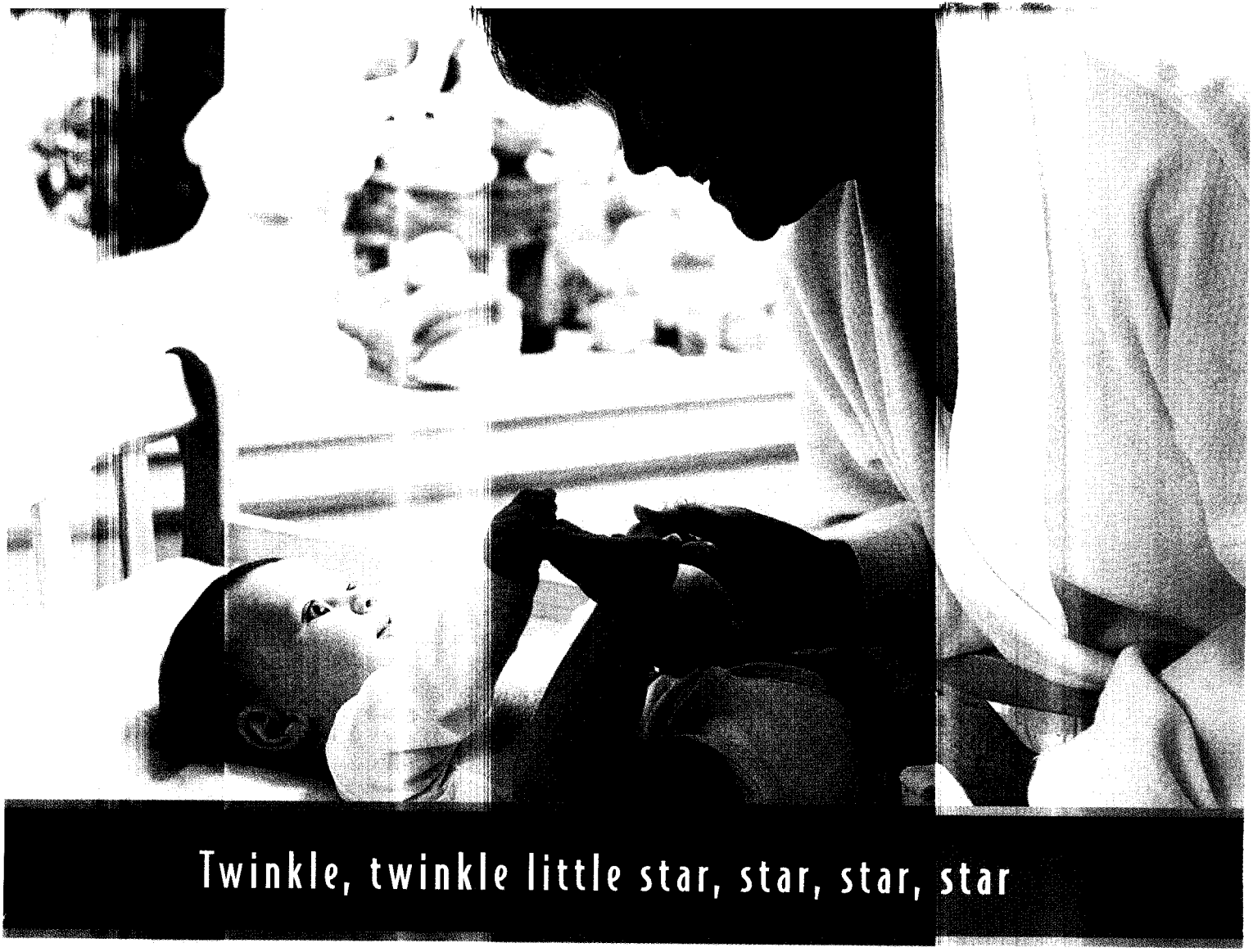

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(Out of 379 mid-cap blend funds)

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**Source: Morningstar 9/30/06. For each fund with at least a 3-year history, Morningstar calculates a risk-adjusted measure that accounts for variation in a fund's monthly performance (including the effects of all sales charges), placing more emphasis on downward variations and rewarding consistent performance. The top 10% of funds in each category receive a Morningstar Rating™ of 5 stars, the next 22.5% receive 4 stars, the next 35% receive 3 stars, the next 22.5% receive 2 stars, and the bottom 10% receive 1 star. The Ave Maria Catholic Values Fund was rated against 379 and 300 funds and received Morningstar Ratings of 3 stars and 4 stars for the 3 and 5 year periods, respectively. The Ave Maria Growth Fund was rated against 821 funds and received Morningstar Rating of 4 stars for the 3 year period. The Ave Maria Bond Fund was rated against 934 funds and received Morningstar Rating of 4 stars for the 3 year period.* *© 2006, Morningstar, Inc. All rights reserved. The information contained herein is proprietary to Morningstar and/or its content providers, may not be copied or distributed and is not warranted to be accurate, complete or timely. Neither Morningstar nor its content providers are responsible for any damages or losses arising from any use of this information.*

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THE WEEK...

our friendship to America." (Read: We're quite ready to quit Iraq and Afghanistan if that's a vote-winner.) At his recent party conference, he affirmed that he is instinctively in tune with socialism, supporting a bigger state, high and rising levels of taxation, the National Health Service (the last Marxist institution in Europe), gay marriage, and all the rest of it. So he's ever so slightly to Blair's right of left of center, unless he is ever so slightly left of right of center. Anyway, it may be nine more years in the wilderness . . .

■ In the matter of global warming, not all "greenhouse gases" are equal. Methane is one of the worst, 23 times more potent than carbon dioxide in contributing to atmospheric heat. A nation anxious to fulfill its obligations under the Kyoto Protocol will therefore strive to reduce methane emissions. Over to Britain, where scientists have concluded that the country's biggest single source of methane is the eructations of British cattle. Apparently these bovine belchers are not digesting their food properly because it isn't chewy enough. Thus the BBC report, anyway. We are suspicious. The British have shown a marked tendency in recent years to blame their misfortunes on their poor, dumb cattle. First there was foot-and-mouth disease, then the mad-cow scare, now this. Could there be some alternative explanation for the high levels of methane in Britain's air? One that has nothing to do with cows, but perhaps something to do with the human inhabitants, and their notoriously indigestible food? Could suet pudding, rhubarb crumble, spotted dick, pickled eggs, and Marmite be at the source of this problem? We are only speculating.

■ Codie Stott, a 14-year-old schoolgirl in the north of England, was arrested, questioned, and held for (depending on whose story you believe) either three or six hours in either a cell or a "juvenile unit" at the local police station. The crime of which she was suspected was identified by British newspapers, in language that would have had George Orwell chortling with pleasure, as "a Section 5 racial public order offence." What had actually happened was that in the course of ordinary schoolwork, the young lady was assigned to a science study group with five other students, all of whom were conversing in Urdu, the only language known to four of them. Our heroine asked the teacher if she might be transferred to another group. At that point all the school's PC alarms went off, the principal came running, the police were alerted, and the law took its course. Said the principal, in words that should chill the blood of anyone who loves liberty: "We aim to ensure a caring and tolerant attitude towards people and pupils of all ethnic backgrounds, and will not stand for racism in any form."

JOHN BOLTON PERFORMS

At the U.N., where the feckless
Scandalize his name,
Bolton, whose demeanor maddens,
Takes unnerving aim
With a cool insouciance at
China, Russia, and
Sissified Old World weak sisters
Sitting on a hand.

—W. H. VON DREELE

■ A largely unreported civil war is going on in France: Arab and Muslim youth daily fight the police. At the end of last year, in many weeks of continuous and violent rioting, the police—indeed, the government—lost control of the street and have been trying to recover it ever since. No chance. This year, according to the latest count done by the Ministry of the Interior, nearly 2,500 officers have been wounded. The Muslims live in ghettoes and are largely unemployed. A high proportion either use or deal in drugs. In one such ghetto, Les Mureaux, a Paris suburb, two policemen tried to ticket a Muslim for not wearing a seatbelt. Refusing to stop, he rammed through the police car blocking his way. Hundreds of youths then swarmed out of the high-rise buildings around and attacked the policemen, leaving one of them with a double skull fracture. Spokesmen for the police speak of an intifada, and are demanding armored vehicles and water cannons to deal with it. But the politicians and media come out with their hands up, calling for more social services and affirmative action and giving permission to build ever more grandiose mosques. Pretty soon, there will be more skull fractures, if not worse.

■ NATIONAL REVIEW readers will of course be familiar with rap superstar Jay-Z, *né* Shawn Corey Carter, president and CEO of Roc-a-Fella records. Mr. Carter is "one of the most respected rappers in the music industry," according to one reference source. Alas, the respect extended to Mr. Carter and his *oeuvre* in the Free World seems to have done him little good with the rulers of mainland China. A concert Mr. Carter planned in Shanghai has been canceled because the authorities over there object to the drug-, sex-, and violence-laden lyrics of his songs. China's Ministry of Culture seems to be the force behind the ban. The state-run *Shanghai Daily* reported that the ministry canceled the Oct. 23 concert because, "Some of Jay-Z's songs contain too much vulgar language." Shed a tear for the benighted inhabitants of China, cut off by a cruel, philistine despotism from the finest fruits of Western culture.

■ The Nobel Committee is finally paying heed to a bit of home wisdom from Africa: It takes a *grameen*. This year's Peace Prize was awarded to Bangladeshi banker Muhammad Yunus and the Grameen Bank he founded in 1976—*grameen* is Bengali for village. Yunus has done pioneering work by issuing microcredit loans to some of his nation's poorest, in sums often as small as nine dollars. These loans—on average about $200—have added up, and in 30 years the Grameen Bank has lent out almost $6 billion. Perhaps even Polonius would extend Mr. Yunus some credit, for though a lender he be, his aid has reached some 6.5 million borrow-

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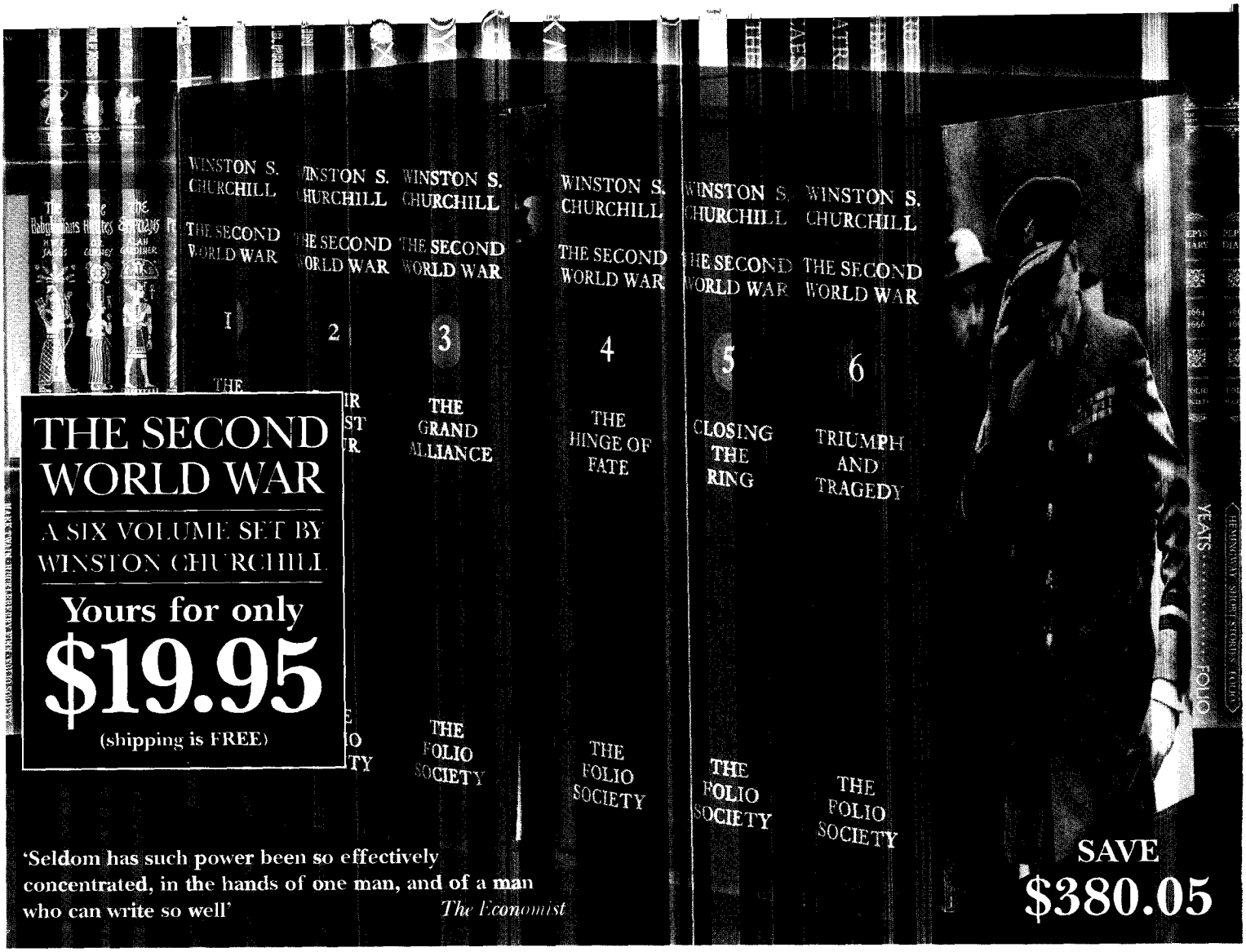

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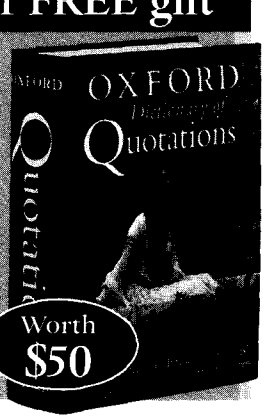

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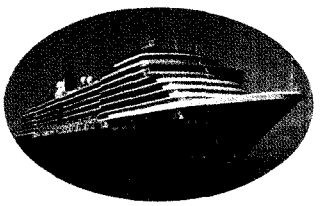

Tall, dark, and handsome, it's the oooo-oooo-Oosterdam—your date for 7 glorious nights this November!

DON'T DELAY ANOTHER MINUTE: THE time has come to sign up for the ***National Review* 2006 Post-Election Mexico Cruise**. With over 245 cabins already booked—and just five remaining in our allotment—the time to act is now! *Right now!*

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Take advantage of this unique opportunity to meet top conservatives: "Definites" for our voyage are Nobel Prize-winning economist **Milton Friedman**, legal scholar **Robert Bork**, esteemed historian **Victor Davis Hanson**, eminent academic **Bernard Lewis** (*the* world expert on Islam's bloody history with the West), former federal judge **Kenneth Starr**, former Congressman and now Club for Growth chief **Pat Toomey**, leading "quotas" foe **Ward Connerly**, acclaimed conservative authors **Dinesh D'Souza**, **Norman Podhoretz**, and **Midge Decter**, Foundation for the Defense of Democracies president **Cliff May**, plus the "gang" from *NR*, led by none other than **William F. Buckley Jr.**, who will be joined by Editor **Rich Lowry**, Washington Editor **Kate O'Beirne**, "Happy Warrior" columnist **Mark Steyn**, Senior Editors **David Pryce-Jones** and **Ramesh Ponnuru**, Managing Editor **Jay Nordlinger**, and Editor-at-Large **John O'Sullivan**.

Join them for seven relaxing days and nights of politics and policy conservative revelry, and world-class luxury cruising.

As *NR* cruise alumni (there are thousands!) know, our trips are remarkable events, marked by scintillating political shoptalk, wonderful socializing, intimate dining with our editors and speakers, making new friends, the rekindling of old friendships—and, of course, grand cruising. That's what's in store for you on the ***National Review* 2006 Post-Election Mexico Cruise**. There are countless reasons to come but none bigger than the luminaries who will be aboard this luxury trip—what a truly extraordinary gathering! It's one of the best ensembles we've ever had on an *NR* cruise, which guarantees that our seminar sessions (featuring ample audience "Q & A") will be fascinating.

- Imagine **Bill Buckley** and **Milton Friedman** discussing the national and global economies, giving their unrivaled thoughts on where America has been, is, and is going in the pursuit of free markets and liberty.
- Two years ago *NR* cruisers were enthralled by the interchanges between **Bernard Lewis** and **Victor Davis Hanson** on the brutal revival of the age-old struggle between Islam and the West. These academic giants—joined by **David Pryce-Jones**, *NR*'s respected expert on all things Arab, and **Cliff May**, a renowned writer and terrorism expert, and former *Commentary* editor **Norman Podhoretz**—will be with us yet again to provide their razor-sharp insights on America's dealings in the Middle East.
- Who is better positioned to discuss the state of the federal courts than former judges **Robert Bork** and **Kenneth Starr**? Or the fight against race quotas than **Ward Connerly**? Or the latest phases in America's culture wars than **Dinesh D'Souza** and **Midge Decter**? And reflections on all that and more from the unrivaled **Mark Steyn**? We are terribly fortunate to be sailing again with these thoughtful conservative leaders.
- Former Rep. **Pat Toomey** (now running the Club for Growth) is a true-blue conservative whose authoritative and honest take on the state of the GOP on Capitol Hill following the November 7th elections is something no one will want to miss.
- And they'll be joined in all the ruminating over and analysis of the 2006 elections and their aftermath by *NR*'s editorial heavyweights—**Rich Lowry, Kate O'Beirne, Ramesh Ponnuru, Jay Nordlinger**, and **John O'Sullivan**.

ENJOY SEVEN BALMY DAYS AND COOL CONSERVATIVE NIGHTS!

DAY/DATE	PORT	ARRIVE	DEPART	SPECIAL EVENT
SAT/Nov. 11	San Diego, CA		5:00 PM	evening cocktail reception
SUN/Nov. 12	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars evening religious services
MON/Nov. 13	Cabo San Lucas (Mexico)	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	late-night smoker
TUES/Nov. 14	Mazatlan	8:00 AM	6:00 PM	
WED/Nov. 15	Puerto Vallarta	8:00 AM	11:00 PM	evening cocktail reception
THURS/Nov. 16	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars late-night smoker
FRI/Nov. 17	AT SEA			morning/afternoon seminars evening cocktail reception
SAT/Nov. 18	San Diego, CA	7:00AM		

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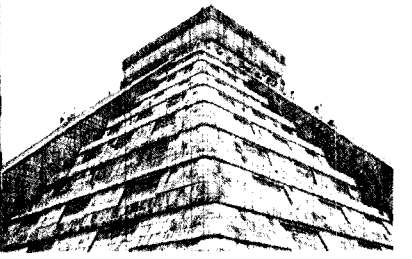

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Age 18+: $1,099 p/p Ages 2 to 17: $999 p/p Infants: $499 p/p

DELUXE SUITE Magnificent luxury quarters (528 sq. ft.) features use of exclusive Neptune Lounge and Personal Concierge, complimentary laundry, pressing and dry cleaning service. Large private verandah, king-size bed (convertible to twins), whirlpool bath/shower, dressing room, large sitting area, DVD, mini-bar, and refrigerator.

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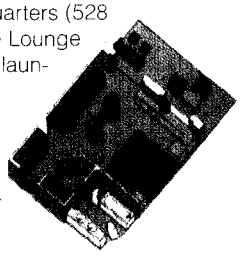

DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,999 P/P
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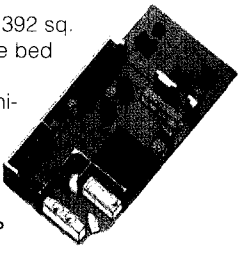
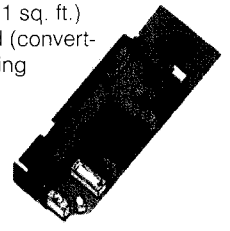
SUPERIOR SUITE Grand stateroom (392 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), whirlpool bath/shower, living area, DVD, mini-bar, refrigerator, floor-to-ceiling windows, and much more.

SOLD OUT



Category SS
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 3,299 P/P
SINGLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 5,999

DELUXE OUTSIDE Spacious cabin (241 sq. ft.) features private verandah, queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bath with shower, sitting area, mini-bar, tv, refrigerator, and floor-to-ceiling windows.



Category VA
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,899 P/P
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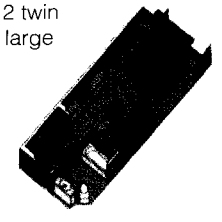
LARGE OCEAN VIEW Comfortable quarters (190 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bathtub with shower, sitting area, tv, large ocean-view windows.



Category D
DOUBLE OCCUPANCY RATE: $ 2,399 P/P
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LARGE INSIDE Cozy but ample cabin quarters (185 sq. ft.) features queen-size bed (convertible to 2 twin beds), bathtub with shower, sitting area, tv.

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CABO SAN LUCAS Where the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Cortes meet at Land's End, "Cabo" sits on the tip of the Baja Peninsula. Sun and sand are big here, but the fish are even bigger. Marlin, sailfish, tuna, and billfish all abound in these rich waters.

MAZATLAN is the home of Mexico's largest shrimp fleet and numerous beachside restaurants specializing in this tasty creature. Explore the colonial villages of the Sierra Madres and hold your breath as you watch the Papantla Flyers work their acrobatic magic.

PUERTO VALLARTA The quintessential resort, "PV" is the darling of the Riviera. Stroll cobblestone streets lined with chic boutiques and galleries. Explore the bustling City Market, or while away the afternoon on a white-sand beach.

The ***National Review* 2006 Post-Election Mexican Cruise** will be remarkable—but then every *NR* sojourn is remarkable. Our winning program of seminars (we'll have six), cocktail parties (three are scheduled—they're *great* opportunities to chat and have photos taken with your favorite conservatives), late-night poolside smokers (two are in store, featuring **H. Upmann** cigars and cognac), and dining with our editors and speakers (on at least two nights)—it's all something you really *must* experience. Sign up now—over 245 cabins have already been reserved! To get one of the five remaining cabins, call The Cruise Authority at 1-800-707-1634 or visit our secure website—**www.nrcruise.com**.

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THE WEEK...

ers, and lifted an untold number from what must have seemed irredeemable poverty.

■ Too late for the recent Nobel Prizes, a young student in Bournemouth, England, has shaken up the world of science by finally solving the age-old problem of how to boil an egg without water. The contraption invented by 23-year-old Simon Rhymes employs an array of high-powered light bulbs to cook the egg. This Bulbed Egg Maker can be adjusted to produce any required degree of yolk viscosity, and will even lop the top off your finished egg so that slivers of toast ("soldiers") can be inserted, in the time-honored British fashion. Mr. Rhymes hopes that "the machine will become a common household item like a toaster," and is seeking investors. We wish him well, and pass this snippet to our entrepreneurially inclined readers, while quietly wondering whether our kitchen has room for yet another food-preparation gadget.

■ 299,999,998 . . . 299,999,999 . . . 300,000,000. The population clickers of the Census Bureau hit the big 3-octuple-0 at 7:46 A.M., Tuesday, October 17. All that is guesswork, of course. No one knows for sure when exactly that momentous American appeared; given the number of undocumented illegal aliens, our population may be much higher. Three hundred mil is a blessing and a headache. Much of the increase is due to recent immigrants who, thanks to multiculturalism and the pace of immigration itself, assimilate slowly. Green elites are exercised by uglification and sprawl, not always wrongly. Without an abortion regime, there would be more Americans born to native Americans, especially blacks. Still, it is better to be us than geriatric Japan, or geriatric Europe with its Islamist underclass. The *New York Times* noted that October 17 was the anniversary of the battle of Saratoga (actually, of the British surrender; the battles of Freeman's Farm and Bemis Heights had been fought and won earlier). With due wisdom, we all should be able to maintain our independence, and our happiness.

■ Married couples have been falling as a proportion of all American households for years, and have now dipped below 50 percent. More people are shacking up, and singles are waiting longer to get married. The decline of marriage as a lived reality is in part the result of its strengthening as an ideal: People exalt marriage so much that they don't feel up to it. We suspect that a less marital society will be an unhappier one, and certainly a less conservative one. There is a real limit to how much government can or should do to reverse the trends. Changing tax and welfare policies that discourage marriage would help.

■ Do we need more evidence that the Duke-lacrosse rape allegations are a hoax? That the entire scandal is based on a fabrication that has harmed the lives of three student-athletes and put Duke University under a cloud of shame for the past seven months? Recall that there is no physical evidence in the case, the defendants have furnished convincing alibis, and the accuser's credibility has gone the way of Tawana Brawley—her story has changed many times, and it has been revealed that she falsely accused three *other* men of raping her ten years ago. Now comes a *60 Minutes* interview with Kim Roberts, the second stripper who was with the alleged victim on the night of the alleged rape. Roberts was the one eyewitness who might have corroborated the rape accusations: According to the accuser, the two strippers were together at the time of the attack, in the course of which they were dragged violently apart by the assailants. Asked during the interview if any of this was true, Roberts said, simply, "Nope." According to her, the assault never happened. By the end of the night, the accuser "obviously wasn't hurt. . . . As far as I remember, she was never undressed." But then this is hardly news.

■ Columbia has been the cool school in the Ivy League for a while now, taking that title from Brown. Make that the cool thug school. Jim Gilchrist and Marvin Stewart, members of the border-patrol group the Minutemen, were scheduled to speak in early October, at the invitation of the College Republicans. The night of their talk, a cadre of leftists stormed the stage, overturning tables and chairs, and attacking Gilchrist. The speakers were escorted to safety by the campus police who, however, had done nothing to stop the melee. President Lee Bollinger said that "no one . . . shall have the right or power to use the cover of protest to silence speakers." All very well (Bollinger is a First Amendment scholar). Yet the aggrieved Left will have the power to silence speakers if storm-trooper students are not expelled. A college president's instincts in such a situation are to wait until everything blows over. But in the digital age, all the action was filmed. Of course Columbia is a left-wing playpen. But is it a left-wing playpen run by bullies? That is what Bollinger will reveal over the next few weeks.

■ Mariane Pearl, a French native of Afro-Cuban and Dutch ancestry, married American journalist Daniel Pearl in 1999. Mr. Pearl was kidnapped and murdered in 2002 by Islamic terrorists while on assignment for the *Wall Street Journal* in Pakistan. Mrs. Pearl subsequently wrote a book about her experiences, and that book, titled *A Mighty Heart*, is being made into a movie. Oscar-winning actress Angelina Jolie has been cast as Mrs. Pearl. That casting has excited protests from some quarters, on the grounds that since some of Mrs. Pearl's forebears were African, while none of Ms. Jolie's were, a racial slight has been perpetrated. Cuban and Dutch groups have so far not been heard from. These days, Laurence Olivier's Othello would start a riot.

■ Is it, or is it not, permissible to show modest emblems of one's religious affiliation in the workplace? No free society prior to ours would have thought the subject worth discussing. For us, exquisitely sensitized as we are to "sensitivity," it is a tremendous matter, fraught with dire possibilities of wounded feelings, charges of discrimination, and litigious assaults. Latest to become embroiled in this issue has been British Airways, which sent home an employee because she was wearing a neck-

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lace with a Christian cross on it. The employee pointed out that BA permits Sikh employees to wear turbans and female Muslim employees to wear headscarves. The airline responded that jewelry is treated separately in their rules, and ought to be worn under the company uniform. (Does that rule apply to wedding rings, we wonder?) A lawsuit has of course been launched. No doubt when millions of dollars have been spent and hundreds of hours of court testimony heard and recorded, we shall all be much wiser—as wise, perhaps, as we were back when nobody would have given a minute's thought to such inconsequentialities.

■ Petty Officer 2nd Class Michael A. Monsoor, a 25-year-old Navy SEAL, saved the lives of three comrades by throwing himself on a grenade in the Iraqi town of Ramadi. The grenade had hit Monsoor's chest and fallen to the floor of the sniper hideout the SEALs occupied. "He never took his eye off the grenade," said one of the survivors, "his only movement was down toward it. . . . We owe him." As do we all. R.I.P.

NORTH KOREA

Rogue Realities

With its nuclear test, North Korea has again flaunted an action that many nations would deny and engage in only on the sly. This is because rogue behavior is Pyongyang's most lucrative business endeavor. It thinks it can count on South Korean and Chinese support no matter what, and hopes to play the United States by selling "concessions" two or three times over—say, by freezing the nuclear program it was already supposed to have frozen in the 1990s.

We've assumed for a while now that Pyongyang has nukes, and the test was simply a dramatic confirmation. The North alone can't overturn the strategic status quo in East Asia. The real threat is that, already a practiced proliferator, it will sell its technology to other states hostile to the U.S. North Korea has been cozying up to Iran and Venezuela in particular, and we must make sure it doesn't transfer weapons or technologies to those or similar states, or to terrorists.

Democrats have been quick to blame North Korea's latest provocation on the Bush administration. They say Bush should have stood by the Agreed Framework, even though the North Koreans were discovered in 2002 to have begun cheating on it "as the ink was drying" in 1994. (The words are Colin Powell's.) Under the agreement, the North Koreans froze their plutonium program, but they kept operating a secret uranium-enrichment program. When the U.S. called them on it, they confessed, pulled out of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and sped ahead with their manufacture of nukes.

Bush critics maintain that the administration should have carried on with the Agreed Framework because at least the plutonium program—which is much more readily exploitable for nuclear weapons—was stalled. But there is no telling how much plutonium the North Koreans had diverted prior to the agreement, and as long as they were able to keep the fuel rods, as they were under the Agreed Framework, they could pull out of the agreement whenever they liked and reap all the nuclear material as if they had never signed at all.

Bush has also been scored for failing to talk directly to Pyongyang. But over the last decade we have talked to North Korea in every manner possible. The Clinton administration engaged in bilateral talks, resulting in the Agreed Framework. The Bush administration hoped to avoid the Clinton administration's mistake of cutting a deal North Korea had no intention of honoring. To this end, it initiated multilateral negotiations—the so-called six-party talks—that included North Korea's influential neighbors (although the talks also included bilateral meetings between the U.S. and the North). These too have failed. North Korea has absented itself from them this year in protest of our crackdown on its counterfeiting operations.

It has to be made plain that the North Korean regime will be wiped from the earth should it, or anyone else, ever use its nukes.

We should now end the six-party talks altogether and begin to pressure North Korea on every possible front in order to convince it that its attempts at nuclear blackmail will backfire. The unanimous U.N. resolution passed in mid-October is a good start. It has sweeping language calling on the North Koreans to dismantle their nuclear program entirely. It bans the export to North Korea of any material related to its nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons or ballistic missiles. The resolution will help the United States in getting other countries to cooperate with inspections of North Korean shipping (which will mostly take place in ports). The Chinese grumbled about the inspection regime, but for now are inspecting overland cargo moving from their territory into North Korea.

China ultimately holds the key to the existence of the North Korean state—without its trade, the desperate Pyongyang regime would likely collapse. The Chinese surely don't enjoy having a lunatic as a neighbor and the resulting region-wide instability, but they also fear that a collapse of North Korea would trigger a refugee outflow and bring about an American-allied united Korea across the Yalu River. We should convince China that it is making a mistake in propping up North Korea. We can put pressure on China by prodding it to abide by its international obligations not to chase current North Korean refugees back over the border, and by making it clear that we will support Japanese rearmament—including nuclear arms, should it come to that—in the dangerous environment created by China's client state.

It has to be made plain that the North Korean regime will be wiped from the earth should it, or anyone else, ever use its nukes, and we should enhance our deterrent by rotating nuclear assets into the region. Missile-defense technology should be made available to our allies, and we cannot allow any daylight between ourselves and our most important ally in the region, Japan, which is angered and frightened by the North's bellicosity.

The rest of the world is watching, most importantly Iran. It must not be in doubt that the calculation behind North Korea's test is a blunder: Provocations will gain rogue states nothing but more isolation and pain.

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Sen. Jim Talent

■ ELECTION '06 ■

Talent v. McCaskill

A showdown in the Show-Me State

RAMESH PONNURU

Sen. Jim Talent doesn't blame President Bush for his political travails. It's true that the Missouri Republican is in a tight race: An early-October poll put him three points behind his Democratic challenger, state auditor Claire McCaskill. It's also true that McCaskill thinks Bush will drag Talent down to defeat: She attacks the president so frequently, you would think she were running against him.

Talent isn't running away from Bush. Zinged for "voting with Bush" 94 percent of the time, he shoots back that he's glad that the president agrees with him so often. Rather than attributing his problems to Bush, he says that Missouri just has tight races.

He has been in three of them recently. In 2000 he ran for governor and lost by only 21,000 votes. In 2002, he challenged Sen. Jean Carnahan and won by 21,000 votes. The national climate has been different each time, he tells me, but the races have all been close.

Talent is a type of legislator that has always been rare and is now even rarer. He fairly consistently votes with conservatives while spending most of his time building a record of centrist legislative accomplishments. In the Senate, his top priorities have been a crackdown on meth labs—Missouri is not proud to be the meth capital of the country—and legislation to make it possible for small businesses to band together to buy health insurance for their workers. Both initiatives enjoy bipartisan support. The latter has so far been blocked, however, by a combination of Senate liberals and Blue Cross/Blue Shield, who for different reasons want to preserve regulations Talent's bill would weaken. Talent thinks that the next two years might bring a breakthrough: With Bush on his way out, Senate Democrats might not be so intent on denying him legislative victories that they stop even moderate legislation.

One of Talent's minor causes has been the end of "predatory lending" to members of the armed services by payday-loan companies. The chief of naval operations told Talent that the companies were making sailors ineligible for deployment by bankrupting them. Talent, who sits on the Armed Services Committee, got new controls through Congress.

Talent played an important role in one major conservative victory: the passage of welfare reform in 1996, when he was in the House. The fact that President Clinton signed the law, along with its success, has taken the conservative edge off that reform. Speaking to a group of supporters in Independence, he mentions John Kerry's thin legislative record and adds, "I've done five times that much in four years."

Talent is one of the most thoughtful senators of either party. He has long advocated a larger army. "Of course" the military has to "transform," he tells me. "But transformation should not be at the expense of boots on the ground." It's a stance that has put him at odds with four defense secretaries (Clinton's three and Donald Rumsfeld).

He defends his vote for Medicare coverage of prescription drugs from critics on the right. Had that bill not passed, he argues, we would sooner or later have ended up with Ted Kennedy's version of the program, and then Republicans would be fighting to reform it to look more like the one they actually passed. "I just voted to skip ahead."

The positions and style of McCaskill pose a sharp contrast to Talent's. The senator voted for Justice Alito, while she opposed him. She wants to roll back Bush's tax cuts on high earners; there are a few more taxes he wants to cut. On immigration, she is with the president, for once. He's on the other side: "Missouri doesn't want an amnesty and they want a secure border. I agree with them." He favors a constitutional amendment to preserve the definition of marriage. (The Democratic position, he says, is that "the courts can rewrite the Constitution, but not the people.") She opposed amending even Missouri's constitution.

They don't seem to see eye to eye on any aspect of the War on Terror. She says it will be won through careful police work, not by military means. Talent disagrees with that categorical assessment, but also charges that she does not support the war's

DARREN GYGI

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policing aspect. She endorsed the *New York Times*'s leaking of the existence of the Terrorist Surveillance Program on the theory that the terrorists probably already knew about it. She thought that the recently enacted law on the treatment of terrorist detainees did not go far enough in giving them rights. And she wants a two-year withdrawal from Iraq. Talent, meanwhile, supports the law on detainees, favors the Terrorist Surveillance Program, and wants to stay in Iraq until we have finished training the Iraqi security forces.

Where he is measured and genial, determinedly unshowy, she is acerbic and combative. Sometimes these traits add punch to her attacks. "He agrees with President Bush more than I agree with my husband," she has said of Talent. Sometimes her soundbites come back to bite her. In September she said, "George Bush let people die on rooftops in New Orleans because they were poor and because they were black." She later allowed that she "probably should have said it another way." She did not elaborate on how the sentiment could have been better expressed. If she is elected, her tongue will quickly drive Republicans nationwide to distraction, and may have the same effect on her more politic Democratic colleagues.

McCaskill ran for governor in 2004, beating the incumbent Democrat in a primary and then losing the general election (narrowly). She lost it in the sticks, and is determined not to repeat the mistake. So she has been spending a lot of time and cash in Springfield, part of the socially conservative southwestern portion of the state. And she has been laying it on pretty thick. When Tim Russert, moderating a recent debate, asked her about Iraq, her answer began: "You know, as a daughter of rural Missouri . . ."

She has also adjusted her positions. She opposed the right to carry concealed weapons, but gets indignant now when accused of supporting gun control. During the Russert debate, she came out for a ban on partial-birth abortion and falsely suggested that she always had been for it.

One social issue was widely expected to help McCaskill. Biotech interests in Missouri have placed an amendment to the state constitution on the ballot. It would establish a right for scientists to create cloned human embryos and to do research on them. Since it would also prohibit the implantation of these embryos in women's wombs, and thus block the development of cloned babies, the amendment's supporters are saying that it would "ban cloning." The language on the ballot reflects their spin.

The state's Republican governor, Matt Blunt, supports human cloning, and former Republican senator John Danforth has been campaigning hard for the amendment. Not surprisingly, polls show majority support for it.

McCaskill supports the amendment. Talent created confusion about his position this February by withdrawing his support from a proposed federal ban on cloning. But he explained that he did so not because he now supports cloning, but because he had become worried that the bill's language would ban other types of research. In May, he declared his opposition to the amendment.

Taking a complicated position on a complicated issue has brought Talent charges of flip-flopping. Pro-cloning celebrities, such as Michael J. Fox, have come to Missouri to raise funds for McCaskill. But by mid-October the consensus of political analysts was that voters are treating the Senate race and the ballot initiative as separate issues.

Talent and McCaskill are both interesting politicians, but their race has been a dismal cookie-cutter affair. They have adopted the standard positions and themes of their parties. Ads have dwelt on the preposterous (he's against veterans) and the irrelevant (she was late paying her property taxes).

Whether Talent squeaks through will probably depend on how bad a night Republicans have nationally. Republican state senator Matt Bartle, who is at the Independence event to support Talent, is counting on Republican get-out-the-vote operations to save Talent, just as Republicans everywhere are counting on them. "I think that the Republican ground game, the GOTV effort, [is] going to show [its] strength on Election Day. Our party has taken GOTV to a level [it's] never been at."

If that's not enough to save Talent, conservatives will have to take comfort in the fact that someone so seemingly unsuited to politics has gotten as far as he has. **NR**

■ **ELECTION '06 II**

Gov. Democrat

The gubernatorial races are looking bad for the Repubs

KATE O'BEIRNE

REPUBLICANS are playing defense on both the federal and the state levels this election season. Along with the Senate and House, they also hold a majority of governorships. While the fate of the GOP's congressional majorities may be in doubt, it's a sure bet that Republicans will lose their 28–22 gubernatorial majority in November.

The Republicans are up against some bad math this year. Democrats hold only 14 of the 36 governorships on November ballots, and Republicans hold nine of the ten without an incumbent seeking reelection. Noting that "the math is terrible for us," Gov. Mitt Romney, chairman of the Republican Governors Association, would regard a net loss of four Republican governorships as "a dream come true." As head of the Republicans' campaign arm, Romney has set a record for fundraising, with $20 million in campaign cash this year compared with $14 million raised on behalf of Democratic candidates. But this year Republicans face an electoral map that money can't alter.

Romney's own blue state is expected to revert to a blue governor when former Clinton Justice Department official Deval Patrick beats Massachusetts lieutenant governor Kerry Healey. In New York, attorney general Eliot Spitzer leads his Republican opponent by 50 points. Neither race appears to be a referendum on the incumbent. Mitt Romney and George Pataki governed differently—the first as a conservative, the second as a liberal—but the vacancies in these overwhelmingly Democratic states provide the opportunity for Democrats to claim the top job.

There is no vacancy in the solidly blue state of Maryland, but incumbent Bob

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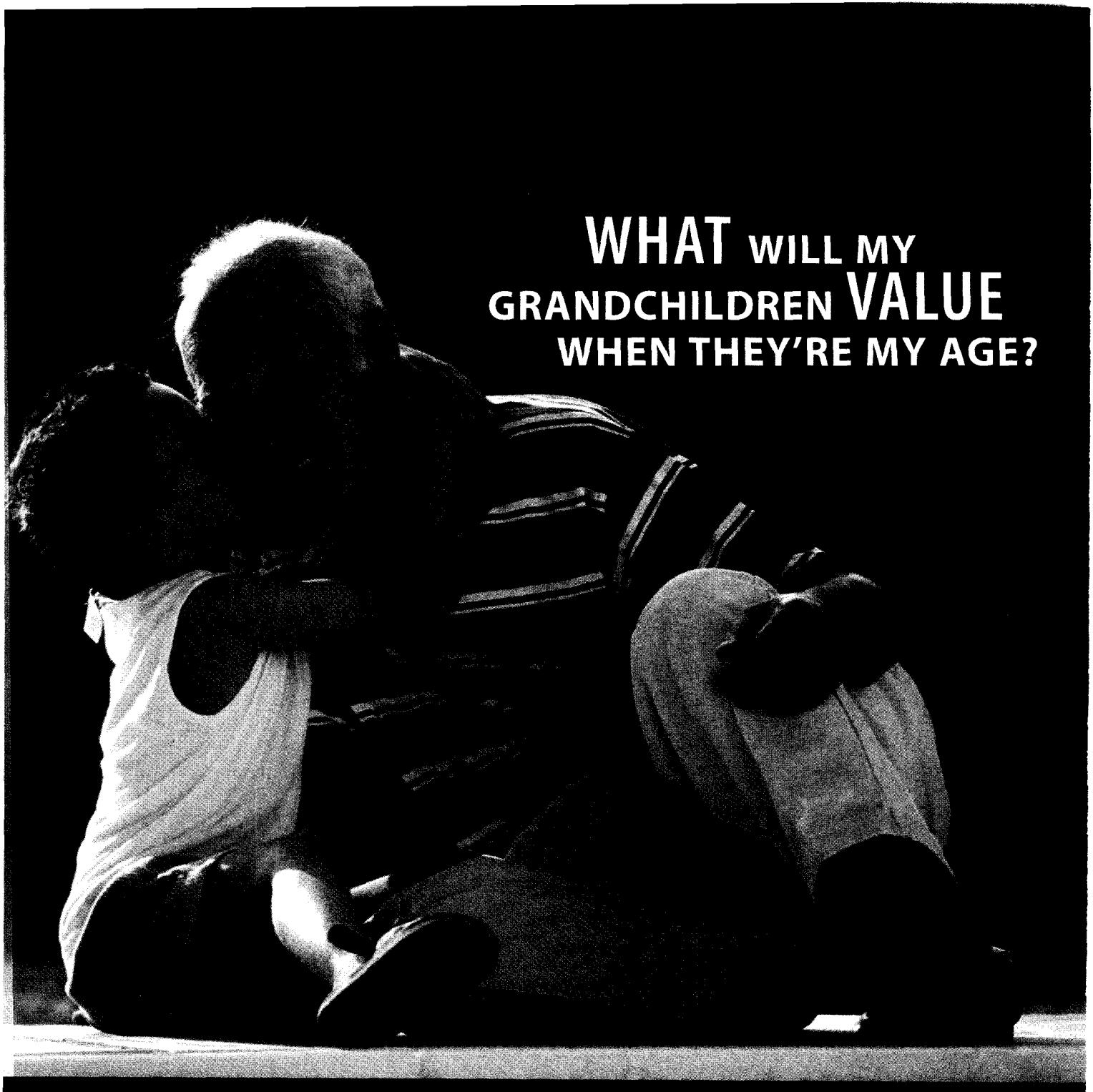

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Ehrlich, who beat Kathleen Kennedy Townsend four years ago, trails in the polls against Baltimore mayor Martin O'Malley. Ehrlich has repeatedly had his sensible vetoes overridden by a hostile Democratic legislature, and has recently wondered aloud about whether he is a "historical accident" in a state that Gore and Kerry comfortably carried.

In red states with open GOP governorships, things also look blue. Democratic candidates in Arkansas, Ohio, and Colorado all enjoy double-digit leads. In Arkansas, attorney general Mike Beebe is favored to win over former congressman and Bush Homeland Security official Asa Hutchinson. Conservative critics rightly fault the term-limited Gov. Mike Huckabee for damaging the Republican brand by supporting the largest tax increase in Arkansas history. But at the state level the parties' brand labels typically don't represent the stark policy differences of Nancy Pelosi and George W. Bush.

Gov. Tim Pawlenty (R., Minn.): A stayer?

Since 1994, Democrats have been winning governorships in the South, where Democratic congressional and presidential candidates fare poorly. Democrats who have won gubernatorial contests in Virginia, North Carolina, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Oklahoma have set their own agendas on local issues. They don't face charges of being weak on national security or backing amnesty for illegal immigrants. John Hood—president of the John Locke Foundation, a conservative think tank in North Carolina—points out that southern Democratic governors are often indistinguishable from moderately conservative Republicans. The GOP had trouble finding a candidate to run against Tennessee governor Phil Bredesen, who holds the only statewide office not in Republican hands. The moderate Bredesen, in a state Bush carried with 57 percent of the vote in 2004, leads his Republican challenger by a margin of nearly three to one. In Oklahoma, Democratic governor Brad Henry has cut spending and taxes and backed a ban on adoption by same-sex couples. He has allowed local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration laws and leads his Republican challenger, Rep. Ernest Istook, by over 20 points.

If Democratic fortunes improve when their candidates behave like Republicans, critics point to trouble for Republicans where their candidates behave like Democrats. In Pennsylvania, Gov. Ed Rendell has a 20-point lead over Lynn Swann; Matthew Brouillette, president of the conservative Commonwealth Foundation in Harrisburg, faults not Swann but the local GOP. "The big problem is that Republicans have been the problem here in Pennsylvania," he argues. Brouillette explains that under former governor Tom Ridge and a Republican legislature government grew at a faster rate than under the late governor Bob Casey Sr., and that there is a deficit in "champions of conservative policy positions." He insists it doesn't have to be that way, even in a "purple" state that Bush failed to carry in 2000 and 2004: "We're more Arlen Specter than Pat Toomey to be sure, but you can still sell the message."

In Ohio, policy sellouts and scandals have turned a red state blue this year. Republican Bob Taft, who raised taxes and pled no contest to corruption charges, is the least popular governor in the country. A recent poll found that 80 percent of likely voters give low marks to the state's economy and favor Democrats by 20 points on the issues of job creation, education, and corruption in government. In the race for this open GOP seat, secretary of state Ken Blackwell, a talented conservative campaigner, trails Democratic congressman Ted Strickland by 15 points.

Heading west, Republican prospects don't improve. Since 2002, Democrats have won governorships in Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, and Montana. With the exception of New Mexico, which Bush narrowly carried in 2004 (and where he basically tied in 2000), all of these states have been comfortably red in the past two presidential contests. As in the South, Democratic governors out west typically favor low taxes, the death penalty, and gun rights. In New Mexico, Gov. Bill Richardson cut the state income and capital-gains taxes; in Arizona, Gov. Janet Napolitano avoided tax increases and has backed medical-malpractice reform. None of these Democratic governors faces a serious reelection threat; if Republican governor Bill Owens is replaced by a Democrat in Colorado, Democrats will control five of the eight governorships in the Mountain West.

Although Republicans enjoy a voter-registration advantage of 175,000, former Denver district attorney Bill Ritter is expected to beat two-term Republican congressman Bob Beauprez in Colorado's gubernatorial race. A good candidate and smart campaign can overwhelm party-affiliation advantages, and Ritter is credited with having the right political profile and message for this year. He ties his ideologically conservative GOP opponent to the bitter partisanship in Washington, by declaring that "the people of this state want problem-solvers who are pragmatic and who won't allow government to be polarized."

President Bush and national issues don't appear to be having much impact on these state races, except in the case of candidates based in Washington, D.C. In the race to succeed Democratic governor Tom Vilsack in Iowa, eight-term Republican congressman Jim Nussle, who is chairman of the House Budget Committee, is being tied to Washington by his Democratic opponent, secretary of state Chet Culver. At their first debate in early October, Culver asked: "Would you be better off running things here in Iowa like Congressman Nussle and President Bush have been running things in Washington, D.C.?" The candidates are currently tied.

If Republicans lose governorships in Massachusetts, New York, Maryland, Arkansas, Ohio, Colorado, and Minnesota—where Gov. Tim Pawlenty faces a surprisingly tough challenge—there are nonetheless a handful of states where prospects are brighter. Democratic governors in Wisconsin, Oregon, and Michigan are in virtual ties with their Republican challengers, and Governor Romney thinks that Illinois, where the former Republican governor is heading to jail and Democratic governor Rod Blagojevich faces corruption charges, could "surprise everyone."

Unfortunately, the bigger surprise would be if Republicans held a majority of the governorships after this election. **NR**

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■ THE MEDIA

Oh, Olby!

Keith Olbermann goes bananas on MSNBC

STEPHEN SPRUIELL

SHORTLY before *Countdown with Keith Olbermann* debuted in the spring of 2003, its host told the *Washington Post*, "Our charge for the immediate future is to stay out of the way of the news. . . . News is the news. We will not be screwing around with it." When asked how he felt about competing nightly with Fox News Channel's Bill O'Reilly, he answered, "I'm not looking to take down Bill. It will be a totally different program. It will not be a show in which opinion and facts are juxtaposed so as to appear to be the same thing."

But the man who pledged not to screw around with the news has—for the last two years—done little else. From his obsessive crusade to uncover supposed voting irregularities in the 2004 election, to the tabloid nature of much of his subject material, to his angry and increasingly bizarre attacks on the Bush administration, Keith Olbermann offers almost nothing in the way of hard news. Instead, he combines highly opinionated liberal journalism with offbeat "news of the weird" segments and a strategy of self-promotion built around picking fights with Bill O'Reilly. As a result, he is making modest but undeniable gains in the ratings.

Olbermann opens each *Countdown* with the question "Which of these stories will you be talking about tomorrow?" followed by teasers for the five stories he plans to feature that night. Typically the lead story is about how the Bush administration is either incompetent or dishonest—or sometimes both, as Olbermann demonstrated one night not long ago: "Mr. Bush at the Rose Garden [press conference]: no plan to attack North Korea, no plan to leave Iraq, no plan to stop lying about the Democrats. To summarize, no plan."

The lead story almost always features the reporting of David Shuster, the MSNBC correspondent who confidently but erroneously predicted that Karl Rove would be indicted in the Valerie Plame leak investigation. (Five weeks after Shuster's prediction, prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald informed Rove that he would not face any charges.) Now covering the Mark Foley page scandal, Shuster soldiers on, undaunted. "Every lawmaker, every Republican lawmaker we've called has said that Dennis Hastert will not be the Speaker of the House this time next week," he told Olbermann. That was several weeks ago.

After Shuster's latest report on the GOP's coming demise, Olbermann customarily invites a Democratic strategist, Bush administration critic, or liberal journalist to join him for a chat. At this point, depending on the guest, Olbermann either wonders aloud with him whether Republicans even know how stupid and corrupt they are, or impatiently asks him why the Democrats aren't doing more to topple the despotic "Mr. Bush" and his Orwellian cohort.

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Olbermann's insistence on calling the president "Mr. Bush" instead of "President Bush" is his way of saying that Bush holds office illegitimately. In the weeks following the 2004 election, Olbermann seized on scattered stories of voting irregularities in Ohio and Florida to suggest that Republicans had somehow rigged the election. He told a reporter for his alma mater's newspaper, *The Cornell Daily Sun*, "I don't think there is any question that Ohio messed up the election [in some way]. The question is: Was it deliberate or accidental?"

The 2004 presidential election marked the turning point between Olbermann's early ambitions to do a hard-news show and his more recent efforts to resemble, as much as possible, a left-wing blog. And the conservative bloggers have responded. Olbermann's obsession with the election-fraud conspiracy theories circulating on the Internet prompted Robert Cox to create OlbermannWatch.com in order to document Olbermann's "careless reporting, reckless reliance on unreliable sources, and monomaniacal obsessions over lunatic fringe jihads." OlbermannWatch.com contributor Mark Koldys fact-checks *Countdown* each night, and tallies the references to "Mr. Bush" on his "MisterMeter."

About halfway through each show, Olbermann supplements his left-wing opinion journalism with a healthy dose of gossip and bizarre news. *Countdown* features a recurring segment called "Oddball" in which Olbermann presents a handful of stories on topics such as pig racing, tomato dodgeball, and drunk animals. Often this is followed by a separate report on celebrity news, such as Madonna's recent attempt to adopt a child in Malawi or the appearance of a sex tape starring the actor who played Screech on *Saved By the Bell*.

Next comes Olbermann's "Worst Person in the World" segment. He uses it to try to pick fights with conservatives in the hope that the ensuing buzz will draw attention to his show and boost its ratings. His ongoing feud with Bill O'Reilly is the most prominent example of this tactic, but he also frequently attacks Robert Novak, Rush Limbaugh, Ann Coulter, Brent Bozell, John Gibson, and Brit Hume. All of these writers and commentators have two things in common: They are conservative, and they have much larger audiences than Olbermann.

Olbermann just released a compilation of these "Worst Person" segments in a book that has O'Reilly, Coulter, and Donald Rumsfeld on the cover. About a week before it hit stores, Olbermann concluded a broadcast of *Countdown* with a "Special Comment" in which he called Rumsfled a "quack" and compared the Bush administration to the government of Neville Chamberlain while simultaneously accusing Bush of threatening America with "a new type of fascism." Olbermann's grandiloquent, over-the-top rant immediately became

Mr. Spruiell writes the Media Blog for National Review Online.

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Dr. Peter C. Mancall is a Professor of History and Anthropology at the University of Southern California and Director of the USC–Huntington Early Modern Studies Institute. He has received two teaching excellence awards at the University of Kansas and in 2004 was named a Gamma Sigma Alpha Professor of the Year by the University of Southern California.

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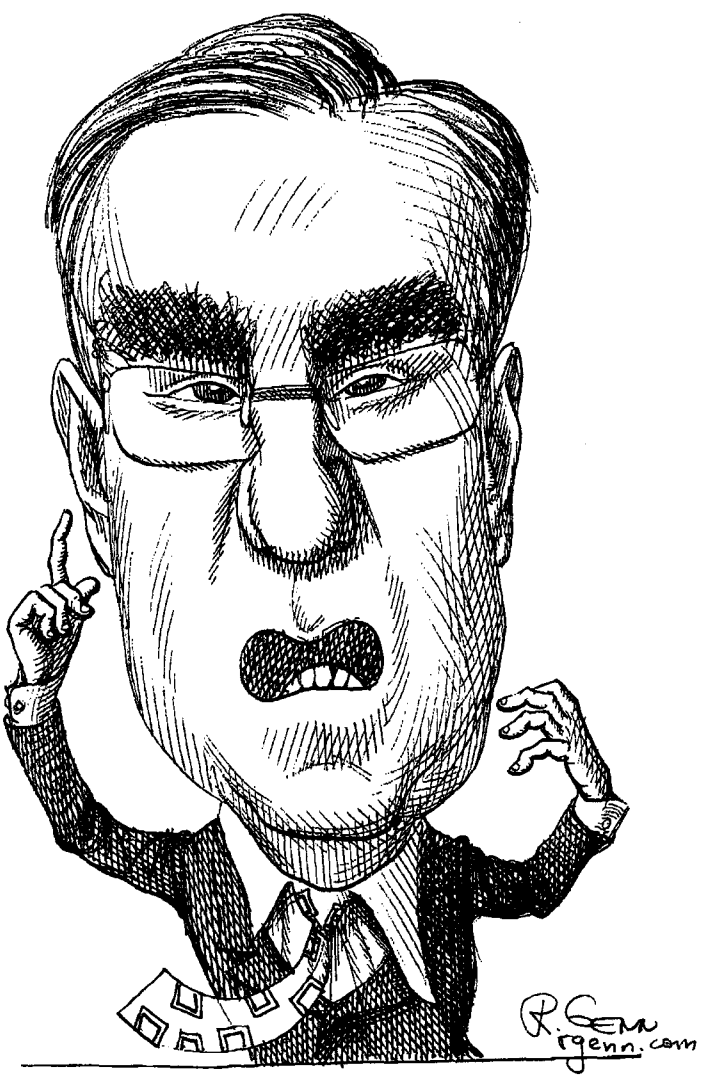
the toast of the left-wing blogs, and the next day his book shot from 98th to 19th on Amazon.com.

Since then, "Special Comment" has become a regular feature on *Countdown*, and each one has been more enraged and eccentric than the last. After Bush quoted an intercepted communication from Osama bin Laden in which the terrorist advocated using the media to turn the American people against their government, Olbermann accused Bush of trying "to get us to confuse the psychotic scheming of an international terrorist with that familiar bogeyman of the far Right, the quote media unquote." On the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, Olbermann blamed the president for failing to build a memorial at Ground Zero and suggested Bush had committed an "impeachable offense" when he "duped" the American people into supporting the Iraq War.

When Colin Powell recently criticized the administration's treatment of detainees, Bush said, "It's unacceptable to think that there's any kind of comparison between the behavior of the United States of America and the action of Islamic extremists who kill innocent women and children to achieve an objective." Olbermann went haywire, taking Bush's words out of context and accusing him of leading America "toward a new and fearful path—one heretofore the realm of science-fiction authors and apocalyptic visionaries . . . a world in which authority can actually suggest it has become unacceptable to think."

But Olbermann's most incredible performance by far came after Bill Clinton's outburst during his interview with Fox News anchor Chris Wallace. When Wallace asked Clinton why he hadn't done more to connect the dots and stop al-Qaeda, Clinton accused Wallace of doing "Fox's bidding . . . your nice little conservative hit job on me." Olbermann took it a step farther. In his telling, Wallace was not only "a monkey posing as a newscaster," but also a "proxy" whose "sandbag effort" had been orchestrated by the Bush White House. What's more, Clinton was "brave" for standing up to this "smear by proxy," and he "told the great truth untold about [the Bush] administration's negligence." Naturally, Olbermann quoted "Eric Blair, writing as George Orwell," and elucidated the many parallels between America under the Bush administration and the totalitarian dystopia described in *1984*.



Keith Olbermann

ROMAN GENN

It should surprise no one that Olbermann bristled at the way Wallace "bullied" Clinton. A few days earlier, Olbermann himself had interviewed Clinton and, during the interview, handed the former president a check for the Clinton Global Initiative. "Here's eight more schools in Kenya—from me," he said. In Olbermann's world, that apparently counts as real journalism—but tough questions are off limits.

It's hard to tell whether there is a correlation between Olbermann's increasingly erratic performances and his improvement in the ratings. Fox's O'Reilly still draws three or four times as many viewers on average, and CNN's Paula Zahn usually beats Olbermann by small margins. But O'Reilly's numbers are trending slightly downward, while Olbermann is making marginal gains. When asked recently whether his anti-Bush tirades had boosted his numbers, Olbermann told *USA Today*, "You can't really put on a 'traditional newscast' anymore, certainly not on cable. And to some degree a fervently expressed opinion is going to be good TV one way or another."

But perhaps it's for the best that, in the three and a half years since Olbermann took over as the host of *Countdown*, he has fully abandoned his stated goal of anchoring a sober news broadcast and become instead a shameless presenter of opinion as fact. It's always better to know where the crazy guy lives—that way, you can avoid his house. **NR**

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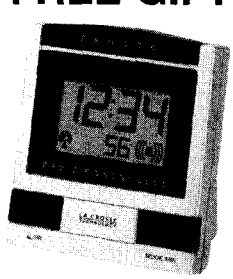

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■ AT WAR

A Damned Statistic

How a Johns Hopkins team got to 654,965

JIM LACEY

THE respected statisticians at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health have once again proved the truth of the old aphorism "There are lies, damned lies, and statistics." In their second study estimating the death rate in Iraq, recently published in the British medical journal *Lancet*, they say that 654,965 (give or take a quarter million) deaths since 2003 can be directly attributed to the coalition invasion. This is a whopping fivefold increase over the estimate in their first study, released in 2004.

If anything in this world is certain, it is that from now until the end of time every critic of American policy in Iraq will repeat this number. But it simply cannot be true. After the current report's predecessor was released in 2004, Fred Kaplan at the online magazine Slate made a solitary attempt to expose its problems. I will not belabor his arguments concerning its methodological flaws, which were repeated in the more recent study. Rather, I will address only a few of the *Lancet* report's largest problems.

First, its results are implausibly out of line with every other estimate of the number of deaths associated with the invasion, occupation, and insurgency. Of these estimates, that of the Iraqi Body Count Project (IBCP) is the most comprehensive, and is generally considered the most accurate. It places the war's death toll around 48,800, or about one fifteenth of what the *Lancet* study reports. The *Lancet* authors dismiss this discrepancy by blithely claiming that the media (the main source of the IBCP numbers) have historically underreported deaths in violent areas. But is it really credible that the most intensely focused media gaze in the history of warfare overlooked more than 600,000 deaths? These supposed deaths would have been concentrated overwhelmingly among men of military age, amounting to the loss of an entire generation of Iraqi manhood—carnage on a scale not seen since World War I. But maybe thousands of journalists just missed it.

A good rule of thumb is that for every person killed in a conflict, another three or four are wounded. If the *Lancet* estimate is right, where are these millions of people? Are they secretly bleeding to death in hidden corners? How come the interviewers who gathered data for the study did not notice the wounded and maimed populating the households they surveyed?

Which leads to another question: Even if we grant that the directors of the study are honest and reliable, what reason do we have to believe the same of the Iraqis they employed to conduct their surveys? It's far from inconceivable that some would lie to make the U.S. look bad. Remember that this is the Middle East, where media outlets try to outdo one another in reporting the highest number of deaths, and are expert at detecting Western and Israeli malfeasance where none exists. This is what produced reports of the Jenin "massacre" that never happened.

But even if the media have underreported the number of Iraqi deaths, as the *Lancet* study claims, they would still pick up an *increase* in this number. And if the extent to which the media underreport deaths is consistent over time—which it presumably would be—then their reports should provide an accurate gauge of the *rate* of increase. Accordingly, the ratio of deaths estimated by the IBCP (which bases its numbers on media reports) to deaths estimated by the *Lancet* team should have remained approximately the same over the past two years, if indeed the *Lancet* numbers are accurate. Yet the IBCP has deaths rising by a bit over a thousand each year over the past two years—a growth rate of less than 10 percent—while the authors of the *Lancet* study report an increase of 550,000, or 500 percent. There is no plausible way of accounting for this discrepancy without concluding that the *Lancet* methodology is seriously flawed.

Then there is a problem with the pre-invasion Iraqi death rate that the *Lancet* study assumes. Its estimate of the total number of deaths depends on comparing the supposed pre-war Iraqi death rate with the supposed post-war Iraqi death rate; get the pre-war rate too low, and you are overestimating the war's victims. Yet this is just what the study does. It puts the pre-war death rate at 5.5 out of every 1,000 Iraqis. That number is almost certainly wrong. Incredibly, it is considerably lower than the death rate in the United States. Death rates, particularly infant mortality, correlate closely with wealth. The richer a society, the lower its infant-mortality rate and the longer its average life expectancy. International sanctions on Iraq prior to the coalition invasion had reduced the country's per capita GDP to the level of sub-Saharan Africa's. Even if the accompanying degradation of Iraq's public-health infrastructure was gradual, the pre-invasion death rate must have been well in excess of twelve per thousand. Furthermore, current Iraqi per capita GDP is about $3,500, and the average death rate for other countries with similar amounts of wealth is nine out of a thousand.

If Iraq's GDP is used to provide a more realistic estimate of the pre-war death rate, 600,000 of the study's estimated deaths are erased. The number of deaths left over is close to the number given by the IBCP, whose estimate is looking more reliable all the time. And if we apply to pre-war Iraq the death rates of Pakistan and Syria—two countries in the same region, with socioeconomic conditions comparable to those of Iraq—we find that more than 100,000 additional predicted Iraqi deaths disappear.

The World Health Organization (WHO) says that Iraq's pre-war child-mortality rate was over 130 per 1,000 births, and that the average life expectancy was 51 years. These numbers are more than twice the pre-war death rate assumed in the *Lancet* study. Today, the WHO puts the child-mortality rate at 35 in 1,000 and the life expectancy at 69 years. This improvement is hardly surprising, given that the United States has pumped billions of dollars into Iraq's health system, and that

Mr. Lacey is a military analyst based in Washington, D.C. His next book, *Takedown*, will be published in March 2007.

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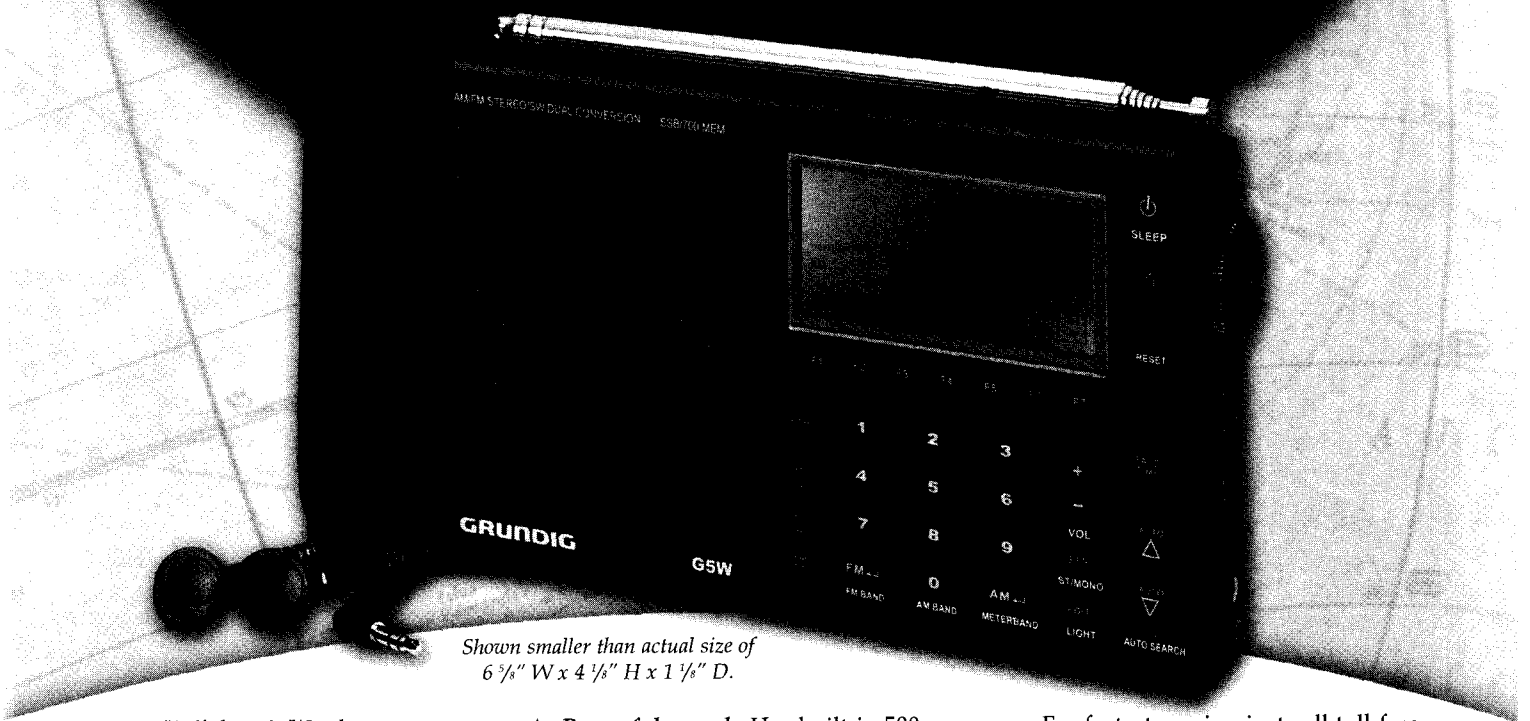

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these funds have helped build or repair over 60 hospitals and clinics throughout the country. If the WTO's numbers are right, then the invasion has actually *saved* lives—about 2 million of them. The statisticians who compiled the *Lancet* study should be pressed either to prove that the WHO's numbers are wrong, or to explain how a nation's death rate can double while its life expectancy grows by 18 years.

The reality of the situation is that the Iraqi death rate, far from doubling since the invasion, has probably been cut in half. To believe that the *Lancet*'s estimate of the pre-invasion death rate is correct requires you also to believe that the sanctions imposed on Iraq following the Gulf War had no effect on public health. Of course, that requires throwing out a much-hyped pre-war U.N. study that said sanctions were ruining the health of Iraqis and had killed over 500,000 children.

The biggest problem with the *Lancet*'s pre-invasion death rate, however, is the time it covers. It looks only at the 14 months preceding the coalition invasion, a period when Saddam was on his best behavior in order to get U.N. sanctions lifted. Consequently, it ignores much of the death and misery that were a staple of his regime. It fails to record, for example, the 300,000 Iraqis (or, in some estimates, up to a million) who were murdered by the regime and dumped in mass graves. Even if the study *had* looked back ten years, though, it still would have missed many of these victims. The study's research teams visited households and asked about deaths in the family; but since Saddam regularly wiped out entire families—and even villages and towns—there would have been no survivors for the teams to interview.

The study also fails to account for lives the coalition has saved by preventing the wars that Saddam inevitably would have started with his neighbors if his regime had survived. His unprovoked invasions of Iran and Kuwait brought hundreds of thousands of Iraqi deaths in direct military combat, and many more were killed indirectly. How many hundreds of thousands would have died in future conflicts with a post-sanctions, WMD-armed Iraq?

Finally, the study does not tell us that the vast majority of the deaths it attributes to the post-invasion conditions in Iraq were men of military age killed by gunshots. A large part of these men were likely insurgents who, if not killed, would have fought either to return Saddam to power or to plunge Iraq into a new dark age.

Every death of an innocent Iraqi should be lamented, but we should not succumb to the idea that wars only kill. They can also save lives—millions of them—and there is reason to believe that this is precisely what has happened in Iraq. Two fundamental points must be remembered. First, people continue to die in Iraq because a certain segment of its population will do anything to gain power and return the country to barbarism. Their victory would come at a catastrophic human cost. Second, and more important, as we feel sorrow for those who have died, we should also celebrate the millions who would already be dead or would eventually die—needlessly—if America had not removed Saddam's evil regime from power. **NR**

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FLORENCE KING

ANCIENT Romans did not go around saying "Boy, this decline and fall is really the pits," but then they didn't have cable.

The clearinghouse of 24-7 Breaking Alienation had a spectacular late-summer season this year. The school lockdown replaced the high-speed chase as the event certain to be in progress somewhere in the country at any given time. Nancy Grace finally drove somebody to suicide, and Anna Nicole Smith forged a long-overdue bond between herself and the literate world when she woke up in her hospital room and found the dead body of her son: The same thing happens in *Cymbeline* when Imogen wakes up to find the decapitated body of Cloten in bed beside her.

Benedict XVI may become the first pope to exchange the apologia of the Catholic holy man for the apology of the unholy American congressman. If he does, it will spell the end of the doctrine of infallibility because you can't apologize and be infallible at the same time. The Vatican will argue that the doctrine applies only to rulings on faith and morals, but Benedict was, in fact, ruling on faith and morals when he addressed the difference between Islam and Christianity. The argument that he was not speaking ex cathedra will mean nothing to the most devout Catholics, whose psychological security will be shattered. Such a debacle might prove to be the last

Florence King's NATIONAL REVIEW columns are collected in *STET, Damnit!: The Misanthrope's Corner, 1991 to 2002*. She can be reached at P.O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, VA 22404.

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straw for doctrinally rigid Third World cardinals and lead to a double papacy like the one in the Middle Ages, when there was one pope in Rome and another in Avignon, except that this time the split will be between Rome and Nairobi.

The spectacle of a pope saying "I didn't really mean it" will also shatter the psychological security of Protestant-atheist elitist conservative neo-royalists like your alienated correspondent, who have had it with "democrazy" and cherish the pope as the only person left in the Western world who can still say "It's true because I said so." Since I don't pray, I can only hope that a full-megillah American apology never passes Benedict's lips. He could get lucky; given Latin's unyielding syntax it may not be possible to translate "to any and all." Something like this happened to John Dryden, which inspired him to make a needless rule that purists still struggle with: You *can't* end a Latin sentence with a preposition, so *don't* end an English sentence with one even though you can.

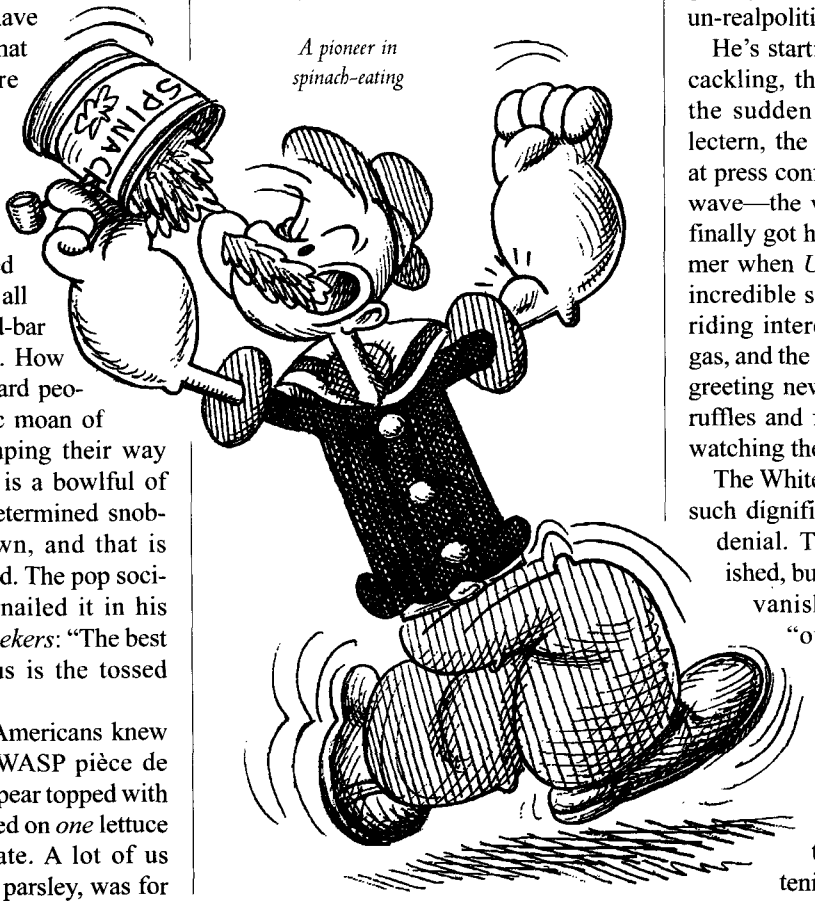
We can also bank on the fact that Benedict is not your ordinary apologizer. No matter what the Muslims demand, we will never have to listen to him explain that he wants to spend more time with his family.

In my present mood I can't help playing eine kleine schadenfreude musik. I'm not glad that the spinach eaters sickened and died, but I'm not at all sorry that our whole salad-bar shtik might be imperiled. How many times have you heard people give forth an ecstatic moan of "Ummmm" while chomping their way through what, in effect, is a bowlful of uncooked food? Only determined snobbery could wash it down, and that is precisely how it all started. The pop sociologist Vance Packard nailed it in his 1959 book, *The Status Seekers*: "The best delineator of high status is the tossed salad."

The only salad most Americans knew was cole slaw, or that WASP pièce de resistance, half a canned pear topped with a bottled cherry and served on *one* lettuce leaf that nobody ever ate. A lot of us thought that lettuce, like parsley, was for decoration unless it was hidden in a sandwich. Then along came Fifties prosperity, suburbia, package tours to Europe, bigger and better pseudo-sophistication, and tossed salads, routinely served now in every greasy spoon in the land and eaten by millions who remember to say "Ummmm."

Think of what life would be like if the closet salad-haters of America took advantage of the terrorist scare to convince themselves that al-Qaeda is poisoning everything green and stopped buying it. No more of those incomprehensible pyramid charts recommending five servings of arugula every day. No more coworkers who are cranky in the afternoon because all they had for lunch was a salad. And best of all, a big drop in the population of illegal aliens because they're the ones who pick the stuff.

It's no secret to NR readers that I have never been a fan of George W. Bush. During the 2000 campaign I picked at him in almost every "Misanthrope's Corner," comparing him to the Aflac duck and Ethelred the Unready, and attributing his problems with women voters to his uncanny ability to remind each of us of the Boy Who Sat Behind Me in Homeroom. Back then I could call him a lout because he was only a candidate. Now that he's president I have to be more respectful, so let's just say that I wish he would tone down his air of malevolent jauntiness before the Secret Service has to change Laura's code name to Bride of Chucky.



A pioneer in spinach-eating

ROMAN GENN

There's an art to being obnoxious. Benvenuto Cellini, Rabelais's Gargantua, Shakespeare's Falstaff, and the Renaissance stock character of the miles gloriosus gnawed on whole joints of greasy meat, threw the bones all over the banquet hall, and gave the serving wench a lot more than a backrub, yet for all their excesses they never offend. The secret of their lovability is flair, but elected politicians are afraid of flair. It's too eccentric, too egotistical; they can't afford to risk it so they hold back and work without the safety net of grandiose behavior.

In St. Petersburg, when the urge to be obnoxious came over Bush while at the table with Tony Blair, all he had to work with were a Parker House roll and a pat of butter, so he chewed them as noisily as he could to give himself a blasé air of swaggering confidence: mouth-slapping as un-realpolitik.

He's starting to get embarrassing. The cackling, the nicknaming, the winking, the sudden grinning lunge across the lectern, the master-of-ceremonies patter at press conferences, the finger-wiggling wave—the whole barrel-of-fun business finally got him into big trouble this summer when *U.S. News* came out with the incredible story about his alleged overriding interest in, shall we say, natural gas, and the pleasure he allegedly takes in greeting new staffers with his very own ruffles and flourishes just for the fun of watching them blush.

The White House denied the story with such dignified brevity that I believe the denial. The story subsequently vanished, but that's not the point. Nothing vanishes anymore; everything is "out there," trailing links as long as a comet's tail. On any given day it could come back to stay, and then we will have two F-words.

The bizarre death of Steve Irwin sent a shudder round the world, mingling the chastening terror of an ancient myth-

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ological curse with the sophomoric idiocy of the worst of the *Jaws* spin-offs. Commentators intrigued by odds said that the circumstances of Erwin's death couldn't come together again in a thousand years, but they were wrong. It happened again the very same month, right where I live, in Virginia, when George Allen became his own stingray.

In a single unguarded moment the down-home Allen campaign turned into classical Greek tragedy, the Fates working at warp speed as a mother with a secret and a son ignorant of his bloodlines came face to face with the dreaded Macaca, long dormant in its cave but sprung now to ravenous life to devour all who uttered its forbidden name.

Allen denies that he learned the word "macaca" from his Tunisian mother even though it is traceable to that part of the world. His mother also swore that she had never heard the word and had no idea what it meant. After an unbelievably clumsy attempt to pass "macaca" off as a nickname for a haircut invented by his staff, Allen settled on the explanation that he had invented the word himself. Whaddya know? Just popped into his head, he told Tim Russert. "Oh, it's just made up."

Words don't pop into the head, they pop out of it—specifically, the subconscious—where they have been all along. Maybe Allen really believes he made "macaca" up, but I *know* I've heard the word before. Ever since the story broke I've been racking my brain and frittering away my time trying to nail it, so if "macaca" pops out of my subconscious it probably popped out of Allen's too.

It sounds like something from one of the countless historical novels I devoured in junior high school, e.g., *Yankee Pasha* by Edison Marshall, about a 19th-century American naval officer who infiltrates a Turkish harem. I've ordered it and several others on interlibrary loan and intend to fritter away still more time re-reading them.

Another possible source are the movies of my childhood, which I intend to re-watch. They fall into six categories: French Foreign Legion; Soldiers of the Queen; anything starring Sabu; Tramp Steamers (scum of the earth in merchant marine; lowly native cabin boy dies saving ship and lives of crew who abused him); Heat Waves (Somerset Maugham remittance men in white linen suits drinking gin and tonic served by native houseboys); and Safaris (great white hunter escorts frigid Englishwoman through jungle, saving her from her daily brush with death as loyal native guide cries "Bwana, come quick! Missy carried off by macaca!").

Why am I doing this? Because it's what alienated people do to take our minds off the decline and fall of the United States. **NR**

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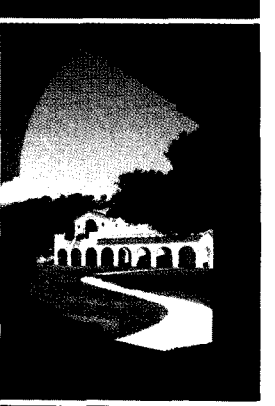

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ISSUES & INSIGHTS

Pelosinomics

Political Economy: Now that it's all scandal, all the time in Washington, the Democrats are letting their guard down a bit to tell us what they'll do with the economy after they win in November. Maybe we should listen.

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House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi has been all over the place talking about what Democrats will do after Nov. 7. But it's hard to take her seriously when she promises to "jump-start our economy and reform our economic policy...to address the needs of working families."

Huh?

"Jump-start the economy"? That's what President Bush did in 2003, when he pushed through bold, broad tax cuts to end a slump that began in 2000 under a Democratic administration.

Since the cuts took effect, the economy has added $1.26 trillion in real output, $14.4 trillion in net wealth and 5.8 million new jobs, while productivity has grown 10% and business investment 24%. Since 2000, total consumer spending has risen $1 trillion – nearly $8,000 per household – after adjusting for inflation. The Dow Jones industrial average is hitting new highs.

Then there's the budget deficit, which the Congressional Budget Office reckons will come in around $250 billion. By our calculations, that's about 1.9% of total output. In early 2004, when Bush vowed to halve the shortfall, it stood at 3.6% of GDP.

The fact is – and we're dealing with facts here, not fantasies – this economy has done better than anyone expected, especially given the mammoth hits it took in the months just before and after Bush took over in January 2001. Democrats know this full well, despite their rhetoric.

They know that nearly $7 trillion in wealth was washed away by the stock market's collapse in 2000 and 2001. They also know that business investment essentially collapsed for three years as a result of that market meltdown and 9/11.

And yet, as noted in a new report from Congress' Joint Economic Committee, ours has outperformed every other major industrial economy since 2001. Reason: tax cuts and low interest rates.

What do the Democrats promise to do about all this prosperity? They'll let the tax cuts lapse, socking millions with billions of dollars in higher levies. They'll raise the minimum wage, hurting the working poor and those with the fewest skills and the least education. And they'll extend jobless benefits, a move that in the past has kept unemployment high (but which today, at 4.6%, is below the average of the last 40 years).

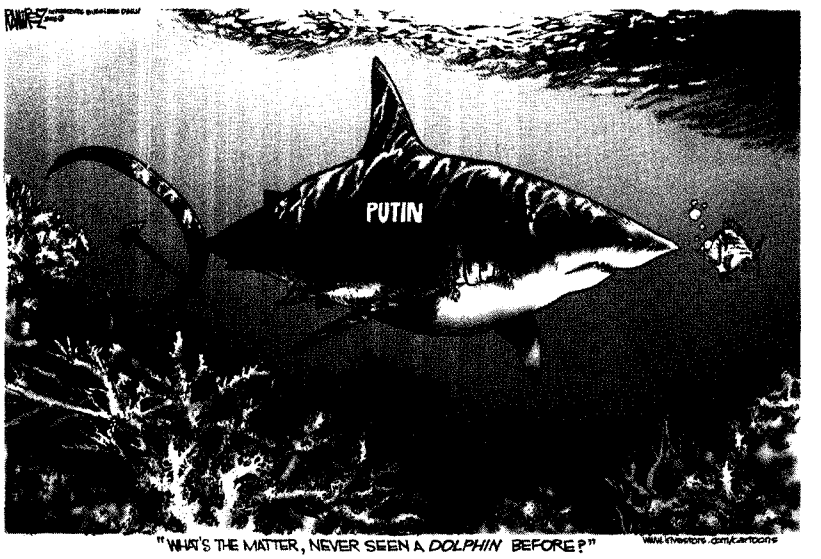
One, and often two, cartoons a day from Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Ramirez, IBD's Editorial Cartoonist and a Senior Editor.

They'll also try to impose new regulations across the economy on everything from energy to broadband, punishing industries they don't like and subsidizing those they do.

Worst of all, they'll do nothing – absolutely nothing – to stop the growth in entitlement spending that will start to engulf the treasury beginning in 2009. Their solution as always: more taxes.

And this is just what they'll admit to. Who knows what else is in store.

How sad the Foley scandal has sucked all the air out of the debate over the nation's future. How tragic that many will now sit this election out for all the wrong reasons. When they wake up to find their taxes raised, the economy stumbling and their incomes falling behind, they'll regret their lassitude. But then it will be too late.



Reykjavik Forever

Security: This week marks the 20th anniversary of Ronald Reagan's bold stand against trading missile defense for an arms treaty. Recalling the lessons of the Reykjavik is key to winning the global war on terror.

At least one house of Congress may be taken over by a Democratic leadership committed to cutting and running from Iraq. And in Iran, a terror regime is trying to pull the wool over the world's eyes about its nuclear program. What better time to recall the late, great president's nerve?

In October 1986, at what was supposed to be a pro-forma meeting between Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev in Iceland, the Soviet premier unexpectedly offered an unprecedented reduction in nuclear weapons. His price was that the U.S. abandon all but the most rudimentary research on the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), which Reagan had called "a new hope for our children in the 21st century."

Contemporary accounts say that after the two sides argued in circles for two hours, Reagan gathered his papers, stood and told Gorbachev: "No way."

A few days after the summit, Reagan pointed out that "the Soviets are hard bargainers. America must be even more patient and determined and united. America must speak with one voice, saying loud and clear, 'We'll walk the extra mile for peace, but we'll never gamble with America's safety.' "

The ridicule started at once. In a 65-minute address on Soviet television, Gorbachev called SDI "the symbol of obstruction to the cause of peace, the epitome of military schemes, of the unwillingness to remove the nuclear menace looming over mankind. There can be no other interpretation."

The Americans, he added, "lacked the breadth of approach, u
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U.N. Secr
just elected

disastrous Maginot Line in World War II. Missile defense "would increase the nuclear arms race," he said, because the other side "will have to develop their technology to create weapons which will defeat such a shield."

In a New York Times op-ed, Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said "Star Wars is a physical and technological impossibility," adding that "it is difficult to believe that any other president since World War II would have ignored the opportunity that knocked at Reykjavik." Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, the ranking Democrat on the Senate

Reagan and Gorbachev bid grim-faced farewells in Reykjavik, Iceland, 20 years ago after the U.S. president refused to budge on missile defense. AP

Foreign Relations Committee, lamented: "This is a sad day for mankind." And the Times itself editorialized that SDI "remains utopian, inconceivable without one miraculous technical breakthrough after another."

But Reagan's approval rating instantly jumped to 72% from 64%, proving that doing the tough, right thing can be popular and causing the Washington Post's Mary McGrory to complain of "the possibility that Americans now think Reagan is infallible,

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›er Think This Way?

97 Reasons Democrats Are Weak On Defense And Can't Be Trusted To Govern In Wartime

Today's Democrats are nothing like Presidents Roosevelt, Truman and Kennedy, who with ›ourage and decisive action kept on top of their ›bs and aggressively confronted one national lefense crisis after another.

Jimmy Carter, elected during the Cold War with the Soviet Union, and ① believing Americans had an inordinate fear of communism, ② lifted U.S. citizens' travel bans to Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam and Cambodia and ③ pardoned draft evaders.

President Carter ④ also stopped B-1 bomber production, ⑤ gave away our strategically located Panama Canal and ⑥ made human rights the central focus of his foreign policy.

That led Carter, a Democrat, ⑦ to make a monumental miscalculation and withdraw U.S. support for our long-standing Mideast military ally, the Shah of Iran. ⑧ Carter simply didn't like the Shah's alleged mistreatment of imprisoned Soviet spies.

The Soviets, ⑨ with close military ties to Iraq, a 1,500-mile border with Iran and eyes on Afghanistan, aggressively tried to encircle, infiltrate, subvert and overthrow Iran's government for its oil deposits and warm-water ports several times after Russian troops attempted to stay there at the end of WWII. These were all communist threats to Iran that Carter never understood.

Carter ⑩ thought Ayatollah Khomeini, a Muslim exile in Paris, would make a fairer Iranian leader than the Shah because he was a religious man. ⑪ With U.S. support withdrawn, the Shah was overthrown, and ⑫ the ayatollah returned and promptly proclaimed Iran an Islamic nation. ⑬ Executions followed. Palestinian hit men were hired to secretly eliminate the opposition so the religious mullahs couldn't be blamed.

Iran's ayatollah ⑭ then introduced the idea of suicide bombers to the Palestine Liberation Organization and paid $35,000 to PLO families whose young people were brainwashed to attack and kill as many Israeli citizens as possible by blowing themselves up. This inhumane menace has grown unchallenged.

The ayatollah ⑮ next created and financed with Iran's oil wealth Hezbollah, a terrorist organization that later bombed our barracks in Beirut, killing 241 Marines and sailors. With Iran's encouragement this summer, ⑯ Hezbollah attacked Israel and started a war that damaged Lebanon and ⑰ diverted the world's attention from Iran's nuclear bomb program.

In November 1979, Iranians, including ⑱ Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, their current puppet president who was elected in an unfree, rigged election in which opponents were intimidated into not running, ⑲ stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran and held 52 U.S. personnel hostage for 444 days.

Carter, after nearly six months, ⑳ belatedly attempted a poorly executed rescue with only six Navy helicopters (of eight) that weren't allowed to meet with their weather forecasters because someone in authority worried about security.

- America ㉑ can thank the well-meaning but naive and inexperienced Democrat, Jimmy Carter, for a foreign policy that lost a strong military ally, Iran, and ㉒ put the U.S. at odds with a gangster regime that was determined to build nuclear bombs to wipe Israel off the map and threaten the U.S. and other nations. Iran also has a working relationship with al-Qaida, which also wants nukes. Care to connect the dots?
- Shortly after a meeting at which Carter kissed Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev on each cheek, ㉓ the USSR invaded Afghanistan. Carter the appeaser was shocked. "I can't believe the Russians lied to me," he said.

  During the Carter Democrat period, ㉔ communism was on a rampage worldwide. In an unrestrained country-capturing spree, communists took over ㉕ Ethiopia, ㉖ South Yemen (㉗ located at the mouth of the Red Sea where they could block Mideast oil shipments and access to the Suez Canal), ㉘ Afghanistan, ㉙ Angola, ㉚ Cambodia, ㉛ Mozambique, ㉜ Grenada and ㉝ Nicaragua.
- Compared to the pre-Vietnam War defense budget in 1964, Carter requested in fiscal 1982's defense budget ㉞ a 45% reduction in fighter aircraft, ㉟ a 75% reduction in ships, ㊱ an 83% reduction in attack submarines and ㊲ a 90% reduction in helicopters.
- The Soviets for years ㊳ consistently spent 15% of their GDP on defense; ㊴ in 1980 we spent under 5%. As a percentage of our government's spending, defense was lower than before Pearl Harbor. No wonder a Republican, Ronald Reagan, had to vastly increase defense spending to help us win the 45-year-old Cold War and relegate the USSR to the ash heap of history – an astounding feat no one (except Reagan) believed possible.
- In addition to a communist enemy rapidly expanding its territorial conquests, Reagan ㊵ inherited from Democratic management a 12% inflation rate (highest in 34 years), ㊶ 21% interest rates (highest since Abraham Lincoln was president), ㊷ a depleted military and ㊸ a serious energy crisis.
- For eight years ㊹ congressional Democrats ridiculed and fought with Reagan and were on the wrong side of nearly all his defense and economic policies. They said he wasn't bright – an "amiable dunce," as party elder Clark Clifford ㊺ put it. They maintained his tax cuts wouldn't work, ㊻ that he insulted the Soviets by labeling them the "Evil Empire" ㊼ and that he was going to start World War III by putting missiles in West Germany to counter new Soviet SS-20 nuclear missiles installed in East Germany. ㊽ John Kerry wanted a nuclear freeze that would guarantee the Soviets overwhelming tactical nuclear superiority in Europe. ㊾ Kerry seemed to constantly advise retreating, giving up and handing our enemies what they wanted – a recipe

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n's request for support to stay alive and take Ortega's communist oviets poured $50 mil- anti-aircraft weapons, unitions into that cen-

- Democratic leaders ㊿ all dismissed as a ridiculous pipe dream Reagan's plan for the U.S. to develop a missile that could shoot down incoming enemy missiles. (51) Showing no vision, Democrats mockingly called it Star Wars.
- Democratic politicians (52) were proved wrong on virtually every vital Reagan policy. (53) His tax cuts set off a huge seven-year economic boom that created 20 million new jobs. (54) Interest rates tumbled from 21% to 7 1/2%. (55) Inflation nose-dived from 12% to 3%. And (56) oil prices collapsed when – contrary to warnings from Democrats – he removed price controls on natural gas.
- Reagan's motto was "Peace through Strength," (57) not peace through weakness and accommodation. With his steadfast determination and perseverance, the communists were kicked out of Grenada and defeated in Nicaragua, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. And for the first time in history Soviet expansion ended.
- Reagan (58) never quit exerting pressure on the Soviets. In Berlin, he demanded that Gorbachev "tear down this wall," and in time the Berlin Wall fell. In the end the communist Soviet Union dissolved. The Reagan-Bush administration had won the Cold War.
- Years later, (59) a group of Russian generals were asked about the one key that led to the collapse of the USSR. They were unanimous in their response: "Star Wars." Gorbachev feared it would render the Soviets' nuclear missiles obsolete for an overwhelming first strike, and they could not afford to build the hundreds more that would be needed or hope to match America's great technical ability. (60) So Gorbachev threw in the towel after Reagan held firm at Reykjavik and refused to stop SDI research. Years later (62) Gorbachev said he didn't think it could have ever happened if Reagan hadn't been there.
- In July 2001, (63) the U.S. military used an SDI missile launched thousands of miles away and flying at near bullet speed to blow a test missile out of the sky. (64) Democrats from Dukakis to Gore to Kerry all said this would be impossible and that missile defense would never work. They were all wrong. Reagan was right.
- The current terrorist threat (65) to U.S. national security did not begin on 9/11, but in the early 1990s. Bill Clinton was elected November 1992. (66) The first bombing of our World Trade Center on Feb. 26, 1993, killed six people and injured 1,000. Terrorists hoped to kill 250,000. (67) Some of the apprehended terrorists were trained in bomb making at the Khalden terrorist camp in Afghanistan.
- October 1993. (68) A Somali warlord, with help from weapons and top trainers sent by al-Qaida, shot down two U.S. Blackhawk helicopters. Eighteen Americans were killed and 73 wounded. Clinton, under pressure from a Democratic Congress, ordered retreat and withdrawal of all U.S. forces. Said Osama bin Laden: "They planned for a long struggle, but the U.S. rushed out in shame."
- January 1995. (69) Philippine police discovered Ramzi Yousef, mastermind of the World Trade Center bombing, had a plan to blow up 12 American airliners over the ocean and fly a plane into CIA headquarters. They informed Clinton's government of the plot.
- Bin Laden (70) tried to buy weapons-grade uranium to

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■ COVER STORY

The Fate of Rick

A great senator fights for his political life

JOHN J. MILLER

DURING a televised debate in Pittsburgh on Oct. 12, Republican senator Rick Santorum and his Democratic challenger Bob Casey Jr. stood so close together that it almost looked like they were holding a joint press conference. Yet they quarreled from the get-go. Early on, Santorum leaned toward Casey, pointed at the camera, and ordered the Democrat to look into it and answer a question. Casey refused, telling Santorum that he was "desperate" and "hyperventilating." Santorum became visibly agitated with his opponent: "I don't know how you can say so many words and say nothing." At times, Casey appeared unnerved, and the senator never let up. "Stop talking, Rick. I've got a point to make," Casey complained at one point. "It would be the first one today," snapped Santorum.

A longtime aide to Santorum commented that he had never seen the senator so aggressive in a debate—and, given Santorum's reputation as a scrappy partisan, that's saying a lot. Yet it may also be a symptom of Santorum's embroilment in the race of his life: For more than a year, polls have shown Casey holding a sizeable lead over the incumbent. A Zogby survey in early October showed Casey, who is Pennsylvania's state treasurer, ahead by 12 points. Although some signs suggest Santorum is starting to close this wide gap—a poll in the Allentown *Morning Call* on Oct. 10 had him down by just 5 points—the senator is clearly frustrated by his struggle to overtake a Democrat he doesn't respect. Casey "has no knowledge of federal issues," Santorum told me the morning after the debate.

That's an overstatement, but it contains an important truth: Casey is an utterly lackluster candidate who owes most of his appeal to his father, the late Bob Casey Sr., who was a popular governor of Pennsylvania in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Yet this race isn't really about the sparkle or qualifications of the younger Casey, who is now making his fourth run for statewide office in the last six years. Instead, it's about Rick Santorum, who is one of the best-known and most outspoken conservatives in Washington. Liberals would love nothing more than to beat him: His defeat is essential if Democrats are to have a chance at gaining control of the Senate after November 7, and it would cost conservatives one of their most talented warriors. Santorum has served as a leader on welfare reform, Social Security, and foreign policy. His dedication to the pro-life movement and traditional marriage is unmatched. Democrats and liberal pundits are eager to interpret his looming downfall as a repudiation of conservatism itself—and some Republicans might even believe it. "There would be a chilling effect," warns a GOP aide. "A lot of Republicans who aren't as gutsy as Santorum would conclude that social conservatism is for losers." Because of this, there may not be a more important election for conservatives in the entire country this year.

'SCRATCH AND CLAW'

"I wasn't born into a family that had a great name," said Santorum at the debate in Pittsburgh. "I'm a guy who had to

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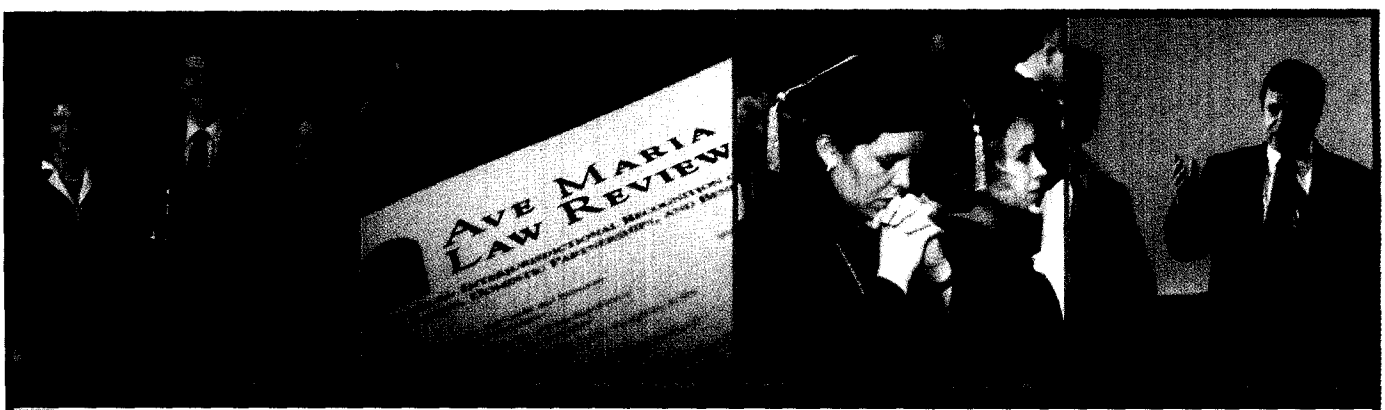
grow up having to scratch and claw." That's something even his most bitter foes would have to concede. In 1990, at the age of 32, Santorum was a political novice who dreamed of serving in Congress. He took on Doug Walgren, a seven-term Democrat, in a race that nobody thought he could win. Santorum claims to have knocked on 25,000 doors in the months leading up to Election Day. Walgren was caught off guard. He outspent Santorum by a margin of nearly three to one, but when all the ballots were counted Santorum came out on top—by fewer than 5,000 votes. Santorum has said that the first time he heard from the National Republican Congressional Committee, which coordinates GOP election efforts in the House, was on the night of his victory.

Santorum joined the "Gang of Seven," a group of newly elected, reform-minded congressmen. Bucking decorum in a chamber dominated by Democrats, Santorum and his allies questioned overdrafts in the House bank—an issue of institutional corruption that helped set the stage for the Republican sweeps of 1994. Yet Santorum never experienced serving in a House majority. He had set his sights on the Senate: He squared off against Democratic senator Harris Wofford, who was appointed to complete the term of Republican John Heinz, who had died in a 1991 plane crash.

Once again, Santorum was the underdog. Not only was he taking on another incumbent, but he was also handicapped by Pennsylvania's reluctance to elect conservatives. The state's most successful Republicans have been moderates in the mold of Heinz and Arlen Specter. In 1994, the widow of Heinz—Teresa Heinz, who would marry John Kerry the next year—blasted Santorum as "juvenile" and part of a "worrisome breed" that is "overflowing with glib ideology." Yet Santorum upset Wofford, 49 percent to 47 percent. He won reelection in 2000, besting Democratic congressman Ron Klink by 6 points at a time when presidential candidate George W. Bush was losing Pennsylvania by 5 points. "Santorum is the first authentic conservative to win statewide in recent memory," says Rep. Phil English, a moderate Republican from Erie who recruited Santorum into the College Republicans some three decades ago.

As he struggles against Casey, Santorum is trying to remind his supporters of this personal history. "Democrats win polls," he said the day after the debate. "I win elections."

Yet he has never faced such determined opposition. "I'm public enemy number one of the pro-choice and gay community," says Santorum. On abortion, he is one of many senators who vote pro-life. The difference is that he is personally responsible for making sure a lot of these votes occur in the first place: He was an architect of the effort to ban partial-birth abortion, a strategy that energized the pro-life movement and allowed it to go on



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the political offensive. By visiting the brain-damaged Terri Schiavo in Florida last year, Santorum may have hurt himself with voters, but he also demonstrated that he's willing to take political risks to promote a culture of life. Ten years ago, his own pro-life convictions were put to the test when his wife, Karen, became pregnant with a child who was diagnosed in the womb with a fatal condition. The couple refused to consider abortion. Their son, Gabriel, died two hours after delivery. Today, the senator wears a lapel pin of an angel to honor the boy's memory. (The Santorums have six other children.)

Casey is also pro-life—his father the governor was famously banned from speaking at the 1992 Democratic convention because he dissented from his party's abortion-on-demand platform. Yet Casey is not down-the-line pro-life: He supports over-the-counter sales of the morning-after pill, while Santorum insists that it's an abortifacient. On gay rights, the contrast between the two candidates is starker. "Casey has put one arm around the gay-rights movement," says a conservative Democrat from Pennsylvania. He supports civil unions and is a favorite candidate of the Human Rights Campaign, a group that promotes gay marriage. Santorum, meanwhile, is among the strongest congressional opponents of gay marriage. For this reason, he has become a hate figure on the left. Earlier this year, at a conference of gay activists, Democratic National Committee chairman Howard Dean singled out Santorum as "one of the most mean-spirited and corrupt Republicans in Washington."

This is, of course, absurd. Santorum is deeply serious about his beliefs. Last year, ISI Books, the imprint of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, published his book, *It Takes a Family*, a rejoinder to Hillary Rodham Clinton's *It Takes a Village*. Santorum's volume is surprisingly substantive, compared with the pabulum that usually flows from the pens of politicians. In the preface, the senator describes the book as "an attempt to sketch the past forty years of American history in light of our founders' vision for the pursuit of the common good in a civil society." Its 449 pages discuss everything from taxes to Darwinism, with references to Russell Kirk, *The Lord of the Rings*, and U2 lyrics. With 30,000 copies sold, it's the second-best-selling title in the catalog of ISI Books—only *Everyday Graces*, a book by his wife, has sold more.

After *It Takes a Family* came out, Santorum's enemies scoured it for provocative quotations that have the potential to backfire on their author. The best they could come up with was this: "In far too many families with young children, both parents are working, when, if they really took an honest look at the budget, they might confess that both of them really don't need to, or at least may not need to work as much as they do." Liberal interpretation: Santorum hates moms with jobs! The Casey campaign has turned this line into an attack ad featuring the voice of a

STEVE MELLON/AP

Quarreling at close quarters, Oct. 12

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working mother who suggests that the senator "doesn't understand how hard it is in order [sic] to make ends meet."

There was little doubt that Democrats would try to exploit the book: Santorum is normally a very good interview subject because he isn't afraid to speak his mind. When he was working on *It Takes a Family*, several advisers wondered whether the senator was just creating a new vulnerability for himself. Wouldn't it be better to put out a book of maudlin anecdotes and poll-tested proposals? But Santorum didn't budge. "One of my fellow congressmen from Pennsylvania asked me, 'Why are you doing this now? Why not wait until after the election?'" he told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. "Because people will read it now and they won't read it after the election. I really do want people to read this. I believe it."

A CONVICTION POLITICIAN

Santorum is clearly a conviction politician who would rather persuade others to move in his direction than change his own views to satisfy popular sentiments. This is a trait that many voters appear to admire: In a September poll, 54 percent said that they respect Santorum for sticking to his principles. The senator has tried to turn this perception into an asset, acknowledging that he can be abrasive: "Sometimes what I say sounds like fingernails on the chalkboard to people," he said at a fire station in Bucks County in mid-October. But he insists that this is a merely a side effect of taking a stand on difficult subjects. "I'm a passionate guy. I'm tough. I'm a fighter," he said in the Pittsburgh debate. "But you know what? I'm an Italian kid from a steel town. What do you expect from me?"

These blue-collar roots occasionally have influenced Santorum's voting record. He opposed NAFTA as a member of the House and, as a senator, backed the Bush administration's steel-import protectionism. He doesn't shy away from battles he believes in. Although he doesn't serve on the Senate's Foreign Relations Committee, Santorum has tried to shape the debate about American challenges in the post-9/11 world. "Some say we are fighting a war on terror. That is like saying World War II was a war on blitzkrieg," said Santorum in a speech at the National Press Club on July 20. "Today, we are fighting

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against Islamic fascists." His recent remarks on Iran have been especially harsh. This is the type of talk that gives the State Department jitters, even if it happens to be true.

Two years ago, Santorum's apparent unwillingness to stay away from controversy earned him enormous criticism from conservatives. GOP congressman Pat Toomey launched a primary challenge against Republican senator Arlen Specter, who had clashed with the Bush administration on tax cuts and other issues. Santorum did more than issue a perfunctory endorsement of his fellow incumbent—he campaigned hard on Specter's behalf, and convinced many Republicans that, although Specter was far from ideal, at least he would hold the seat in November. Specter eked out a win in the primary and cruised to an easy reelection. Time hasn't healed all grudges. "Santorum's base is depressed because a lot of conservatives still resent his forceful support of Specter," says Jim Broussard of the Hershey-based Citizens Against Higher Taxes. "I hear from people who say they want an apology. Maybe they should get over it, but they haven't." Toomey, for his part, has urged his supporters to fight for Santorum this year.

If Santorum loses on Nov. 7, it won't be because he was too liberal for supporting Specter, but because he was to the right of most voters in a state that has cast its electoral votes for Democratic presidential candidates since 1992. Polls suggest that Santorum performs about as well among conservative Republicans as Casey does among liberal Democrats. The senator's real problem is that he doesn't do as well among moderate Republicans as Casey does among moderate Democrats. It would be a sad irony if conservatives were to join hands with the Specter wing of the GOP, fail to turn out on Election Day, and thereby contribute to the defeat of the only true conservative of the last generation or two who has managed to win a statewide contest in Pennsylvania.

Because Casey is pro-life and against gun control, Santorum has had trouble gaining traction against him on what have been a couple of the GOP's most effective issues. This problem is confounded by Casey's reclusive election strategy, which has involved few public appearances and even fewer interviews with the press. "He did so poorly in our *Meet the Press* debate [on Sept. 3] that they put him in the witness protection program," says Santorum. In recent weeks, Santorum has tried to campaign on illegal immigration: Casey has endorsed the McCain-Kennedy bill, which Santorum opposes as too lax.

On Oct. 13, Santorum went to Hazleton, a town near Wilkes-Barre where Mayor Lou Barletta has pushed for ordinances against employers who hire illegal aliens. The senator spoke to a few dozen supporters at Jimmy's Quick Lunch. He didn't look like a desperate candidate, as Casey had called him the day before. Instead, he looked like a pol with sharp retail skills as he prepared a batch of chili dogs, shook hands, and signed posters. He may not knock on tens of thousands of doors anymore, but he's accustomed to coming from behind and confounding the expectations of pundits who underestimate him. People on his campaign believe that if he can get within 3 or 4 points of Casey on Election Day, he will prevail once more. "This race is going to be a nail-biter," said Santorum from behind the counter at Jimmy's. "It's going to come down to one thing: Who wants it most?" **NR**

■ **ELECTION '06 III**

Ford, Driven

Harold Ford Jr. goes against a Corker of a candidate in Tennessee

BYRON YORK

Chattanooga, Tenn.

"He's a hugger," says a fan of Harold Ford Jr. while watching the Senate candidate work the room at the Hamilton County Democratic party's annual Estes Kefauver dinner on October 12. It's true; virtually everyone who approaches Ford for an autograph or a picture also gets an apparently heartfelt embrace. Even though he represents Memphis, 350 miles away on the other side of Tennessee, tonight Ford seems to know every Democrat in Chattanooga. And he wants them to know that he knows; during his speech, he interrupts himself dozens of times as he spots people in the crowd, so the speech goes something like, "Ladies and gentlemen, it's not enough for us to say—John Smith, always good to see you—it's not enough for us to say what Republicans in Washington are doing wrong—Bill Jones, glad to be in your presence—but what we—Professor Hall, happy you're here—would do to fix it."

The audience loves it. And there's no doubt they're pumped; before dinner, the Rev. Dr. Hunter Huckabay, who recently retired as rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, closes his invocation by saying, "Finally, we give thanks to You for the change that is surely coming. We ask this in God's name, Amen." The crowd breaks into applause, which is not the usual practice after prayer.

But despite all the warmth and optimism, this isn't Ford country. Chattanooga is in conservative East Tennessee—George W. Bush easily won Hamilton County in 2004—and Ford's Republican opponent is Bob Corker, the popular former mayor of Chattanooga. Not only do most voters lean Republican, but a lot of Democrats are pretty conservative too. "He'll lose this side of the state," says Tennessee's Democratic governor Phil Bredesen, who's at the dinner. "But the whole trick is, just don't get beaten too badly over here, and then some of the more traditionally Democratic areas [in Memphis and West Tennessee] come into play."

That's a tall order. But if any Democrat with national ambitions is going to win the voters' hearts, it's Ford. He is already doing so with statements like this: "One thing I admired about him was that he made America great. He made America great in the eyes of people around the globe. They looked up to us." You might guess that "he" is Bill Clinton, or perhaps Jimmy Carter. But no. Ford is talking about Ronald Reagan. Never mind that Ford's party, and his father, former Rep. Harold Ford Sr., reviled Reagan back in the 1980s, when young Ford was a teenager. Speaking to audiences today, Ford sings the Gipper's praises. A few minutes later, he calls for a constitutional amendment to

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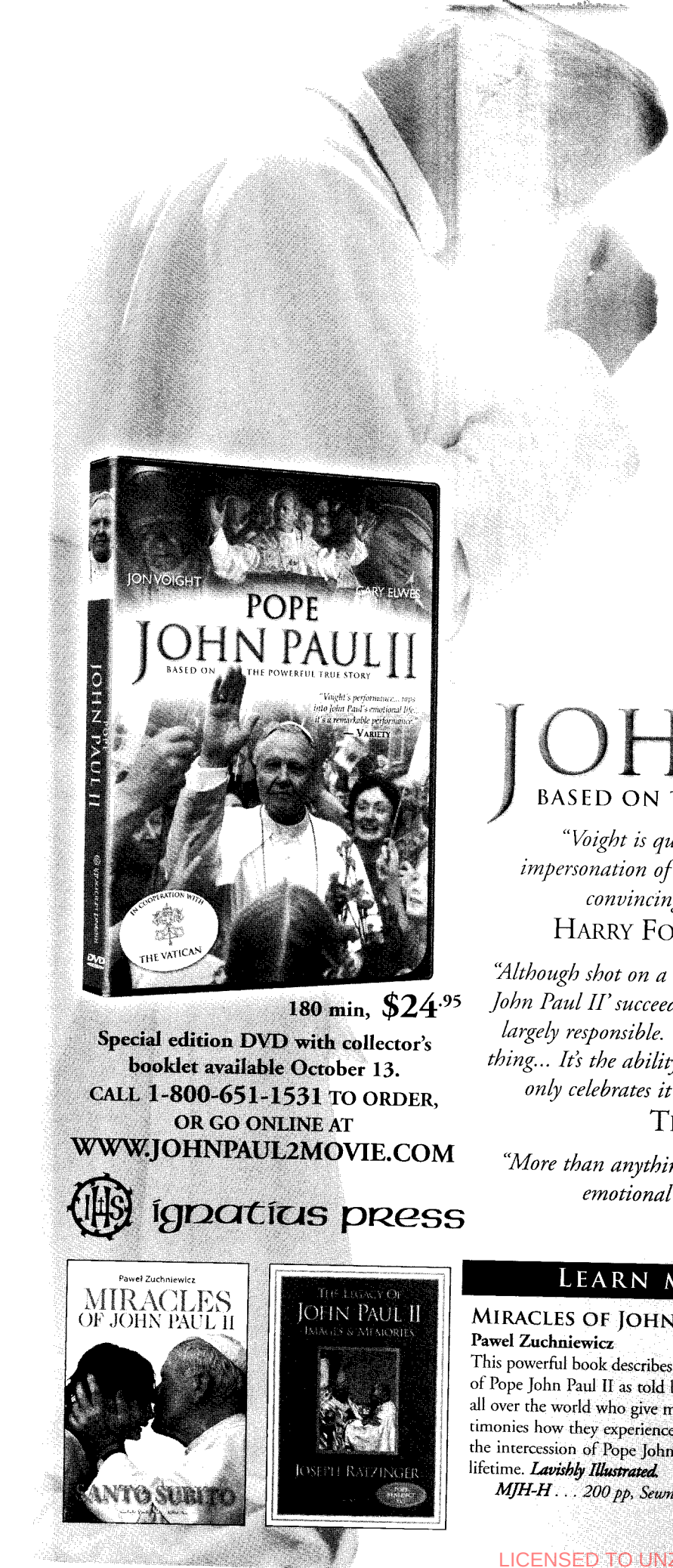

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balance the federal budget. And then he says he wants to get tough, or at least tougher, on illegal immigrants.

That's the kind of thing you must say if you want to get elected in Tennessee statewide rather than just in Memphis, which Ford has represented since his father, the first black congressman from Tennessee since Reconstruction, retired in 1997. And Ford is working hard to convince red-state voters that he shares their values and goals. Anyone watching television in recent weeks has seen (dozens of times) an ad that shows Ford walking down the aisle of the Memphis church where he was baptized. "Here I learned the difference between right and wrong," Ford says, stopping at a pew while organ music plays in the background. "I voted for the Patriot Act, five trillion in defense, and against amnesty for illegals."

Of course, there are questions that can be raised about some of those votes. Corker, for example, points out that Ford voted against renewing the Patriot Act before it was amended to satisfy mostly Democratic demands, and that Ford has voted to cut funding for intelligence. But the fact is, Ford doesn't have the record of a Nancy Pelosi Democrat. For the last five years, his rating from the liberal Americans for Democratic Action has been in the 70-to-80 range. That doesn't make him a raging moderate, but it does mean he has steered away from some of the extremes of the national Democratic party. He opposes partial-birth abortion (although he supported it a number of years ago). He's against gay marriage. He's for gun rights. He voted to authorize the war in Iraq.

So far, the centrist thing is working. Last summer, Ford trailed Corker by about a dozen points. Today, the race appears to be dead even. And as it has gotten closer, Democrats have looked more and more to Ford as the candidate who might put them over the top in the Senate. A few months ago, most analysts paid attention to five states in which Democrats might pick up seats: Pennsylvania, Montana, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Missouri. The problem is, Democrats need six to regain control. Then Ford surged in Tennessee. Suddenly a race that once seemed hopeless for Democrats looked like the key to victory.

THE REPUBLICAN

"How ya doin', Alex?"

Bob Corker walks into the old, chilly Roane County Courthouse in Kingston, a small (pop. 5,264) town in East Tennessee, virtually in the shadow of the Oak Ridge nuclear reactor. About 40 people have gathered to hear him speak—all of them supporters except one, Alex Bissell, a young man working for the state Democratic party whose job is to take a small video camera to all of Corker's public appearances in hopes of catching some gaffe or misstep that could make the difference in the race. "Tracking" is a common practice on the campaign trail these days, a fact brought to the public's attention with Sen. George Allen's infamous "macaca" blunder.

Corker could teach Allen a few things. He greets Alex with a smile at the beginning of the event, and at the end he introduces him to the crowd. "We always have with us Harold Ford's man Alex, who records everything I do," Corker tells the group. "I want you to know Alex is a good guy. He's developing a warm heart. I actually see him becoming a Republican." The crowd laughs, Alex grimaces a little bit, and everyone moves on.

Corker talks about the basics of his platform: his support for President Bush's tax cuts, for spending restraint, for national security. He says he has always been a problem solver, from the time he started his own construction company through his years as mayor of Chattanooga. But he also spends a lot of time explaining why he is different from Ford. "When I was 26 years old, I was riding around in a pickup truck making $19,977 a year," Corker says. "I had my own business, making $19,977 a year. When my opponent was 26 years old, he graduated from law school and inherited his daddy's congressional seat, making $133,600 a year. And so our view of the world and how we've been shaped has been very, very different."

It's a theme Corker hits again and again as he travels around the state. And indeed, the contrasts between Corker and Ford play havoc with some common preconceptions. In this race, the black candidate is the child of privilege, while the white candidate pulled himself up by his bootstraps. Ford moved to Washington when he was nine years old and was educated at the exclusive St. Alban's School and then the University of Pennsylvania. Corker attended Chattanooga City High School and the University of Tennessee. Corker wouldn't put it in racial terms, but he wants you to know who's the self-made—and homemade—man. At every stop, he says Ford is "more D.C. than Tennessee."

> Corker wants you to know who's the self-made—and homemade—man. At every stop, he says Ford is 'more D.C. than Tennessee.'

It's a pretty compelling argument for voters who are suspicious of Washington to begin with, and Corker's supporters say it is particularly important in light of where each man is getting his greatest support. According to the campaign-finance watchdogs at OpenSecrets.org, as of July, just 32 percent of Ford's campaign contributions were from Tennessee, with the rest coming from out of state. Ford raised more money from New York City than from his hometown of Memphis, and more money from Washington and Los Angeles than from Nashville. Broken down by zip code, Ford raised more money from 10021 in Manhattan—the Upper East Side—than from any zip code in Tennessee, save one in Memphis. Corker, on the other hand, received 92 percent of his contributions from Tennessee. People in Nashville, Chattanooga, Knoxville, Memphis, Johnson City—they all contributed more money than any out-of-state source.

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Ford has gotten money from Barbra Streisand and Larry David, neither of whom, it's probably safe to say, contributed because of his kind words about Ronald Reagan. Corker has received contributions from Darrell Waltrip and Peyton Manning. If you're a Republican strategist in Tennessee, that's a pretty good difference to exploit.

But Corker isn't just trying to make an issue of Ford's privilege and his supporters in the Hollywood elite. There's also the question of—nobody will quite come out and say it directly—corruption in the Ford family. Ford's father, who served eleven terms in the House, was indicted on federal bank-fraud and conspiracy charges in 1987. His trial resulted in a hung jury; he was tried again and acquitted in 1993. Ford's uncle, state senator John Ford, is currently under indictment on federal bribery, extortion, and witness-intimidation charges. Ford's aunt Ophelia was a state senator, but was removed from office because of allegations her supporters had cheated in the special election that put her there. And Ford's brother, Jake, who is running to replace Harold in Congress, recently told reporters, "I've been arrested, I believe, maybe four times total." (Charges included marijuana possession and assaulting his father; Jake Ford was never convicted on any of them.)

That's a lot of baggage; even though Harold himself has never gotten in any such trouble, a family record like that might give some voters pause. But when Corker has raised the subject—he has referred to the Fords as a "political machine"—Ford has quite effectively deployed the "How dare you!" defense. And Corker has backed off. Instead, he has tried to suggest that there might be questionable ties between Ford and his father, who is now a lobbyist for Fannie Mae, the government-chartered financial institution that became a personal piggybank for its top executives.

"When you went on the [House] Financial Services Committee," Corker said to Ford at their debate in Chattanooga on October 10, "why was it that within 60 days your dad became the registered lobbyist for Fannie Mae to lobby you in Washington on that committee? And why was it—with all the things that have happened with Fannie Mae, all the irregularities, all the billions of dollars that have been lost—why is it that you continued while you were on that committee to talk about what a wonderful job they've been doing?"

"Attacking my father has no place in this campaign, Mr. Corker," an aggrieved-looking Ford answered. "My father is too good of a person, too decent of a person, and raised me too right to do any of the things that my opponent, who is now—I didn't think he could stoop any lower into the gutter than he already has in this campaign, but it looks as if rock bottom hasn't hit there yet." At that point, it looked as if Ford had for-

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gotten to answer the question. But he went on to say, "Neither my dad nor any member of my family has ever lobbied me, nor would I allow them to. Leave my family out of this, sir."

Of course, Ford has made accusations of his own against Corker. He has pointed out that a Corker company employed four illegal aliens back in 1988. He has said that Corker has not been forthcoming about his taxes. And he has often pointed out that the chairman of the finance committee for Corker's campaign is the chief executive of Pilot Oil Company, and that Big Oil might have undue influence should Corker be elected.

The truth is that no disqualifying information has emerged about either man, at least so far. After all the talk about each other's background, it seems likely that the race will come down to the fact that Ford, whatever his appeal, is a Democrat and will vote with Democrats in the Senate, and Corker, whatever his appeal, is a Republican and will vote with Republicans.

'GAYS, GUNS, GOD, AND ABORTION'

Back at the Estes Kefauver dinner in Chattanooga, there's a young congressional candidate, Brent Benedict, handing out campaign literature in what appears to be a hopeless race against Republican incumbent Zach Wamp of the Third District, which includes this city and several rural counties. Benedict is happy to talk about what Democrats have to do to win in Tennessee. "Especially in the rural districts, there are certain things that people just can't get past," he explains. "On the national level, a lot of them vote Republican because of four issues, and we know what those are: gays, guns, God, and abortion. They just can't get past them."

"How about you?"

"Well, I'm pro-life. And I'm a strong supporter of the Second Amendment."

"What about God and gays?"

"Well, I'm a strong Christian," Benedict continues. "I spent time as a missionary when I was younger. And I support traditional family values."

"Traditional marriage?"

"Yeah, traditional marriage."

Benedict—whom Ford points out from the podium, saying, "Anybody who's serious about giving Democrats the majority ought to support this boy"—is clearly taking cues from Ford. But right now, with the polls so close and voters still making up their minds, it seems entirely possible that, even with all of Ford's obvious political skills, the strategy won't work. If Tennessee's voters, who are already inclined to vote Republican, have the choice between a Republican who sounds like a Republican and a Democrat who kind of sounds like a Republican, there's a good chance they'll go with the real thing.

At the end of the Hamilton County dinner, Ford stays for a long time, until workers move in to stack the chairs and toss out the uneaten miniature-pecan-pie desserts. Finally, after all the hugging and autograph-signing and picture-taking, Ford is out the door, stepping into the biggest, baddest, gas-guzzlingest extended-cab Ford F150 Fx4 pickup truck you ever saw. (There are two such monsters in Ford's entourage.) It's much more Darrell Waltrip and Peyton Manning than Barbra Streisand and Larry David. At least, that's the message Ford is sending. Whether Tennessee voters buy it is another question. **NR**

■ **AT WAR II**

Covering Iraq

The modern way of war correspondence

MICHAEL FUMENTO

Ramadi, Iraq

WOULD you trust a Hurricane Katrina report datelined "direct from Detroit"? Or coverage of the World Trade Center attack from Chicago? Why then should we believe a *Time* magazine investigation of the Haditha killings that was reported not from Haditha but from Baghdad? Or a *Los Angeles Times* article on a purported Fallujah-like attack on Ramadi reported by four journalists in Baghdad and one in Washington? Yet we do, essentially because we have no choice. A war in a country the size of California is essentially covered from a single city. Plug the name of Iraqi cities other than Baghdad into Google News and you'll find that time and again the reporters are in Iraq's capital, nowhere near the scene. Capt. David Gramling, public affairs officer for the unit I'm currently embedded with, puts it nicely: "I think it would be pretty hard to report on Baghdad from out here." Welcome to the not-so-brave new world of Iraq war correspondence.

Vietnam was the first war to give us reporting in virtually real time. Iraq is the first to give us virtual reporting. That doesn't necessarily make it biased against the war; it *does* make it biased against the truth.

During my three embeds in Iraq's vicious Anbar Province, I've been mortared and sniped at, and have dodged machine-gun fire—all of which has given me a serious contempt for the rear-echelon reporters. When I appeared on the *Al Franken Show* in May, after my second embed, it was with former CNN Baghdad bureau chief Jane Arraf—who complained about the dangers of being shot down by a missile while landing in Baghdad, and the dangers of the airport road to the International Zone (IZ) . . . and how awful the Baghdad hotels were.

DESCENT INTO HELL?

Most rear-echelon reporters seem to have studied the same handbook, perhaps *The Dummies' Guide to Faux Bravado*. It usually begins with the horrific entry into Baghdad International Airport. *Time*'s Baghdad bureau chief, Aparisim Ghosh, in an August 2006 cover story, devotes five long paragraphs to the alleged horror of landing there. It's "the world's scariest landing," he insists, as if he were an expert on all the landings of all the planes at all the world's airports and military airfields. It's "a steep, corkscrewing plunge," a "spiraling dive, straightening up just yards from the runway. If you're looking out the window, it can feel as if the plane is in a free fall from which it can't possibly pull out." The Associated Press gave us a whole article on the

Mr. Fumento is a longtime journalist and author.

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subject, titled "A hair-raising flight into Baghdad," referring to "a stomach-churning series of tight, spiraling turns that pin passengers deep in their seats."

I've flown into that airport three times now; each time was in a military C-130 Hercules cargo plane, and each landing was as smooth as the proverbial baby's behind. But Ghosh is describing a descent in a civilian Fokker F-28 jet, on which admittedly I have never flown. (It's $900 one-way for the short hop from Amman to Baghdad, and therefore the transportation of well-heeled media people.) So I asked a reporter friend who frequently covers combat in the Mideast and Africa, and has also frequently flown into Baghdad on those Fokkers. "The plane just banks heavily," he said. "It's not a big deal." He requested anonymity, lest he incur the wrath of other journalists for spoiling their war stories. Moreover, you can read similar corkscrew horror stories from reporters who have flown in on C-130s.

As to the overall dangers of flying into or out of Baghdad, one civilian cargo jet was hit after takeoff with a shoulder-launched missile, but landed safely; and one Australian C-130 was hit by small-arms fire, killing one passenger. That's it. No reporter has been injured or killed flying into or out of Baghdad International.

Then there's the dreaded "Highway of Death." Here's Ghosh again, picking up after his horrific corkscrew description. "But the relief is temporary; most of us still have to negotiate the Highway of Death," he writes. "There have been hundreds of insurgent and terrorist attacks along its length since the U.S. military established its largest Iraqi base, Camp Victory, next to the airport three years ago. Many of the attacks are directed at U.S. patrols, but they have also killed scores of Iraqi noncombatants." Only as an afterthought does he note that "recently the highway has become less deadly."

And here's an account from A. A. Gill, a reporter who accompanied another journalist, Jeremy Clarkson, in Iraq last year. He wrote, in Britain's *Sunday Times Magazine* last November:

> The Americans didn't have a Black Hawk to spare for the five-minute hop into the Green Zone, so we were going to have to drive it. This is the bit Jeremy swore he'd never do. When you're asked where you draw the line, this is the place to start drawing. Nobody drives into Baghdad if they've not been given a direct order. Even our minder, Wing Commander Willox, has never done it. . . . This road is code-named Route Irish. [The] Guinness [Book of] World Records has just authoritatively announced that Baghdad is the worst place in the world. . . . This 25-minute stretch of blasted tarmac from the airport to the Green Zone is, as Jeremy might say, the most dangerous drive—in the world.

Yet just two days earlier the *Washington Post* headlined a piece on Route Irish as follows: "Easy Sailing along Once-Perilous

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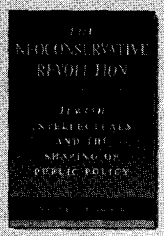

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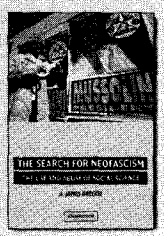

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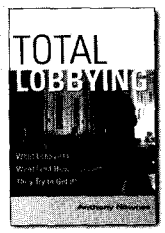

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Road to Baghdad Airport." It observed, "Two months ago, the killings stopped. In October, one person was wounded on the road and no one was killed, according to the U.S. Army. . . . It was safe enough to stop here, to linger, to chat, and a computer screen flashed the statistical evidence. . . . In 10 months, the only enemy fire they have seen on the airport road came after one of the civilian trucks they were escorting broke down." And two months earlier, *USA Today* had published a similar account, backing it up with a quote from an officer whose men patrolled the roads: "Route Irish is definitely not the most dangerous road in Iraq any longer, and everyone who uses it knows it." Apparently, though, the *Sunday Times* reporter didn't know it—and other Baghdad journalists *still* don't know it.

'FEAR AND TENSION' IN THE IZ

With that horrific arrival behind them, it's time for the Baghdad reporters to settle into their lodgings. Those may be in the International Zone or just outside in places like the Al Rashid, Al Hamra, or Palestine hotels. And trust them, their trip into the IZ was stepping from the frying pan into the fire. *Newsweek*'s Joe Cochrane wrote a commentary about the IZ in July 2005 just two months after I first visited it. (All media must come through the IZ to get credentialed.) In other words, we both saw the same place at about the same time—but I don't recognize his IZ.

"I've always been something of an optimist, but everyone has a breaking point. Mine came on Saturday as I toured the infamous 'Green Zone' in central Baghdad," Cochrane began. After providing his view of a mean Baghdad outside the IZ, he continued, "The situation inside the [IZ] is scarcely better. Heavily armed troops guard government buildings and hospitals, menacingly pointing their weapons at anyone who approaches. Soldiers manning checkpoints can use deadly force against motorists who fail to heed their instructions, so the warning signs say, and I have no doubt they'd exercise that right in a heartbeat if they felt threatened. All this fear and tension, and inside a six square mile area that's supposed to be safe."

Inside *my* 'infamous' International Zone the guards make people feel safe, not threatened.

That's funny, because inside *my* "infamous" IZ the guards make people feel safe, not threatened. In 2005, many of them were Gurkhas—a combination of some of the best killers on earth and the politest people you'd ever want to meet. Nobody ever menacingly pointed a weapon at me. Cochrane was right that "roadblocks, blast walls, and barbed wire are the most common sights in this walled-in mini-city," but these defenses contributed to an atmosphere that to me was devoid of fear and tension. As for the idea that it's "supposed to be safe," when I inquired in May 2005 I was told it had probably been months since anybody dropped in a rocket or mortar round. And "dropped in" is probably the best term; the bad guys don't even have the capacity to aim; they just fire and run, hoping the round actually lands somewhere within the zone. It's rare that they actually hit near, much less kill, anybody.

The *real* IZ represents opulence in the midst of war—with terrific chow, huge post exchanges that stock an amazing array of products, the best medical care in the country, and large, sumptuous swimming pools built for Saddam but now open to anybody who works in the zone. Nor have the grotesque exaggerations of the dangers of the IZ gone unnoticed by soldiers and their loved ones. "Dear Chain-smoking, Unwitting Stooges," military blogger Jason Van Steenwyk began an open letter to the Baghdad press corps. "So how come we can get mortared several times a week out here and it never makes the news, but the pogues [rear-echelon soldiers] in the Green Zone can catch three measly mortar rounds and I get my dad emailing me asking why the Baghdad press corps is covering it like it's the second Tet Offensive?"

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HIDING OUT IN BAGHDAD

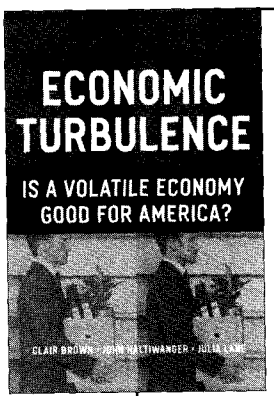
It's not fair to say the hotel-dwellers never leave their safe and comfy confines. "Despite the danger, Nancy [Youssef, Knight Ridder bureau chief] and her colleagues do venture out and do find inventive ways to talk with ordinary Iraqis," then–Knight Ridder D.C. bureau chief Clark Hoyt wrote in a column. He explained that Nancy says, "When I go grocery shopping, I listen to people's conversations. What are they talking about?" It turns out that these shopping trips provide key insight for the "war correspondence" of the Baghdad Brigade.

Even journalists sympathetic to the Baghdad press corps admit they essentially just hide out. Here's how *The New York Review of Books* put it last April: "The bitter truth is that doing any kind of work outside these American fortified zones has become so dangerous for foreigners as to be virtually suicidal. More and more journalists find themselves hunkered down inside whatever bubbles of refuge they have managed to create in order to insulate themselves from the lawlessness outside." Unless you accept "insulation" as a synonym for "reporting," this doesn't speak well of the hotel denizens.

Other reporters have been less generous. The London *Independent*'s Robert Fisk has written of "hotel journalism," and Maggie O'Kane of the British *Guardian* has said, "We no longer know what is going on, but we are pretending we do." They can't even cover Baghdad yet they pretend they can cover Ramadi.

One way the Baghdad press corps and its allies try to steal valor is to invoke the incredibly large number of reporters killed in the war: It's true that over 100 journalists or media assistants have been killed. Yet, with the sole exception of Steven Vincent, the only *American* journalists killed or even seriously injured by hostile action in Iraq have been embeds. *Atlantic Monthly* editor-at-large Michael Kelly (an editor of mine) drowned after his Humvee rolled into a Baghdad canal during the invasion. NBC reporter David Bloom died of a pulmonary embolism, also during the invasion. Both were embedded with the 3rd Infantry Division. CBS News cameraman Paul Douglas and freelance soundman James Brolan were blown up by an improvised explosive device (IED) while accompanying CBS correspondent Kimberly Dozier, herself critically injured. They were embedded with the 4th Infantry Division. So were ABC anchorman Bob Woodruff and his cameraman, who were critically injured by an IED. *Time* correspon-

Debunking Myths



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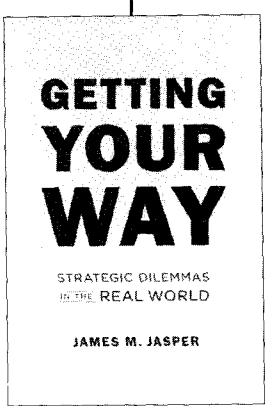

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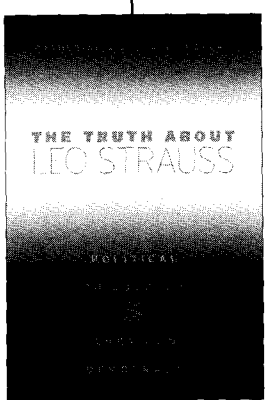

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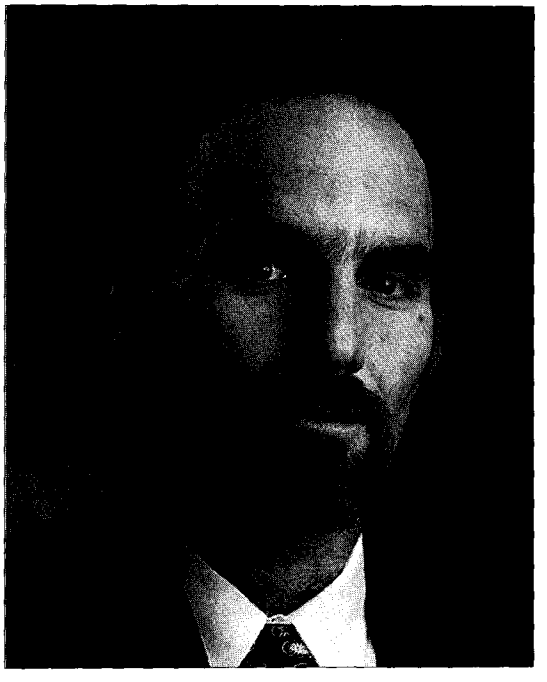
dent Michael Weisskopf had his hand blown off trying to toss a grenade out of his Humvee when he was embedded with the 1st Armored Division. These, not the hotel-bound credit-claimers, are the journalist-heroes of the Iraq War.

TO TELL THE TRUTH

What leads the embeds into the most dangerous parts of Iraq is the glaring gap between the reality of the war and the virtuality emanating from the hotels of the IZ. One of them made this point quite forcefully in a recent column. Jerry Newberry, communications director for the Veterans of Foreign Wars and a Vietnam Army vet, wrote in a September column just before heading off for Afghanistan and then Iraq: "For the most part, the wars being fought by *our* people in Afghanistan and Iraq—their successes, heroism, and valor—[are] reported by some overpaid, makeup-wearing talking heads, sitting on their fat rear-ends in an air-conditioned hotel. They rely on Iraqi stringers to bring the stuff to them and then call it reporting."



American journalist Steven Vincent, 1955–2005

Newberry's bravery and dedication are to be saluted, but as a combat vet he has advantages. So did I, as a veteran paratrooper (on my first trip) and a combat veteran (by the end of my second). Michael Yon, famed for his blog and award-winning photos of his seven-month embed with the infantry in Mosul, is a former Green Beret. Writer and historian Andrew Lubin, a Fallujah-bound embed I met while getting credentialed on this trip, is a former Marine who goes to the rifle range twice monthly. But Patrick Dollard, with no military training, left a cushy job as Oscar-winning director Steven Soderbergh's agent to bunk down with Marines in Ramadi for seven months to film a documentary series (still being edited) that he hopes will show the real war and the real warriors. In February, a Humvee he was traveling in hit a massive IED, which shredded the vehicle and killed two of the three Marines aboard. Dollard was injured and hospitalized. But he had a mission, and was quickly back on the job. The next month, another IED blast injured him, less seriously. Then . . . right back to work. Dollard's experiences alone put the Baghdad press corps to shame. But he insisted to me that exchanging Hollywood for a hellhole wasn't as hard as you'd imagine. "I had to feel the moral imperative to go, and clearly I did feel it," he said.

The sad truth is that the mainstream media have no interest in covering the Iraq War for what it is, observes Dollard. He says they are interested in Iraq only so far as it is useful as a weapon against their self-imagined mortal political enemy, George W. Bush. The embeds, however, want the real picture—and we want to tell the truth about it to the world.

Which is something their detractors simply refuse to understand. Screenwriter-director Nora Ephron says that dispatches from both soldiers and embeds are worthless, because we're "too close" to the war. The best "reporting" apparently is from those most removed. (Amazingly, Ephron also believes embedding was an evil idea dreamed up for this war, even though in World War II and later wars all major news outlets had reporters with the troops on the front lines. That's how we got the incredible dispatches of Ernie Pyle, and the wonderful Iwo Jima flag-raising photo by Joe Rosenthal.)

Sometimes you'll hear that embeds are just shuffled around in armored vehicles. Some are, although IEDs and rocket-propelled grenades still make that less safe than manning a desk. But in my case, I've never been in an armored vehicle that wasn't merely dropping us off at a remote location to engage in foot patrols. Yet Paul Rieckhoff, an anti-war vet who was hawking his boring book, *Chasing Ghosts*, on the same *Al Franken Show* Jane Arraf and I were on, commented on my disgust with hotel-bound reporters by smearing embeds. He labeled those who actually go into battle with troops as "jock sniffers." To him, the Ernie Pyles and Joe Rosenthals of America's past were just a bunch of contemptible groupies. Yet embeds perform a service beyond just their willingness to see combat, and to describe accurately the specific events they witness. "Although some journalism professors may worry that military embedding is subverting the media, I would argue the contrary," Robert Kaplan wrote in *The Atlantic Monthly*. Kaplan, who has been embedded all over the world, went on to observe, "The *Columbia Journalism Review* recently ran an article about the worrisome gap between a wealthy media establishment and ordinary working Americans. One solution is embedding, which offers the media perhaps their last, best chance to reconnect with much of the society they claim to be a part of."

The media-elite Baghdad Brigade and its stateside editors have forfeited this opportunity. It's not just that being with the soldiers puts them at risk, but that they don't *want* to be with those soldiers. They prefer the company of their fellow journalists and that, too, contributes to their unwillingness to leave their walled-in compounds.

It's impossible to blame anyone for not wanting to report from the more dangerous parts of Iraq; over 99 percent of Americans surely would not want to. The trouble with the Baghdad press corps is that, in pretending to be war correspondents when the correspondence they engage in could just as well be done from New York or Washington, they may well be squeezing out from those positions reporters who actually want to do the job. Harry Truman's famous words, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen," suggest wise advice to today's journos in Baghdad: If you don't have the guts actually to cover the war, stand aside for those who do. **NR**

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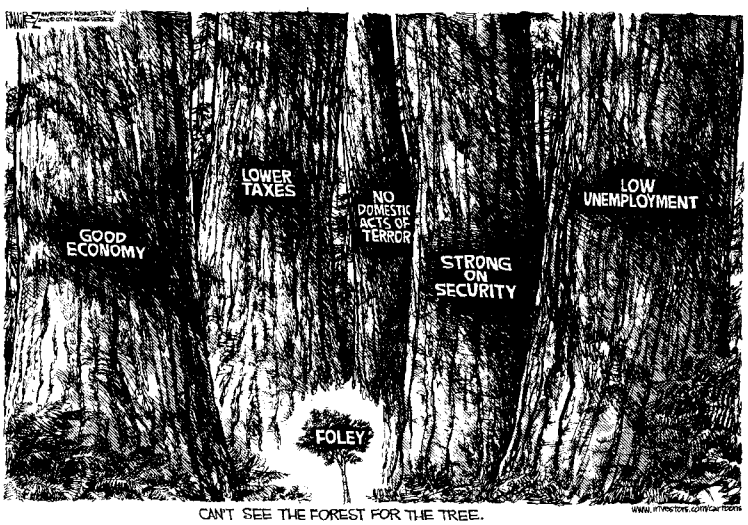
HELP!!!!

It's Pelosi!

When boys are bad and mothers try
To give the kids a scare, small fry
Are frightened more by Nancy than
The bogeyman; so Mother, tan
A backside, sure—don't spare the rod—
But to instill the fear of God
In Junior when his room's a mess,
Screaming Pelosi! beats duress.

—W. H. von Dreele



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the long view

ROB LONG

Memos from Hollywood

TO: Our clients in the entertainment industry
FROM: Kingsley & Winokur Public Relations
RE: African Baby Adoption FAQ

Dear Clients:

At the request of many of our clients, we are now offering an exclusive and dedicated African Baby Acquisitions Strategy Team to our list of services.

As many of you know, adopting an African baby is one of today's hottest trends, but the communications pitfalls are challenging. Done correctly, the adoption of an African baby can be a rewarding and meaningful part of any client's overall public-relations profile. Done incorrectly, however, it can lead to a negative public perception and diminished box-office appeal.

Please review the following Frequently Asked Questions, and contact any member of our African Baby Acquisitions Strategy Team for further information.

Q: I love the idea of adopting an African baby, but hate the idea of going to Africa. Can you help?
A: Yes! As a service to our clients who are unwilling or unable, due to scheduling and/or squeamishness, to travel to the Dark Continent, we are currently assembling a portfolio of African babies in a variety of shapes, sizes, and ages to facilitate your specific acquisition needs. We expect to have these babies collected and ready for inspection by early November, in time for the holidays.

Q: My family is planning a trip to Africa soon. Is there any way we can add a baby acquisition to our vacation?
A: Yes! Working together with several respected, upscale safari companies, we can easily arrange a "baby tour" of several African nations. Tours will, of course, be five-star or better, and with all of the travel amenities associated with upscale, luxury safari tours. Pre-approved babies can be assembled and presented in a natural African habitat, allowing you and your family to select the ultimate souvenir of your trip.

Q: Do these babies come with any guarantees or warranties?
A: No. As you know, the continent of Africa is a challenging place both environmentally and in terms of public health. Therefore, it is impossible for any baby provider to offer guarantees or warranties of any kind. However, many of our clients who have already adopted African babies report that it is these very defects that "make" the experience. Not unlike owning a "one-off" piece of artwork, an African baby is a unique and one-of-a-kind property.

Q: Would it be possible to adopt the sibling of either Madonna's African baby or Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie's? I would like to have some reason to get to know these celebrities for personal and business reasons, and feel that acquiring the sibling to one of their acquisitions would be perfect.
A: While it is impossible to guarantee the extended family network of every African baby, it is possible that certain siblings and/or cousins can be made available for adoption. Please contact our office for the additional fee structure that applies. Obviously, no baby provider can guarantee that any such sibling connection will result in increased contact with a celebrity acquirer.

Q: What services do you provide both before and after acquisition?
A: We arrange, negotiate, and pre-pay for your African baby acquisition as well as preparing and arranging media coverage, both in the bush and upon your return to Los Angeles. In addition, we have several follow-on packages available, including yearly press coverage, Christmas-card photo distribution, and, if necessary, quiet repatriation.

Q: Currently, my wife and I have two children. One is in private school and the other is in rehab. Is there any way we can go to Africa and acquire two African babies in exchange for two American children?
A: Right now, there are no methods for effecting such a switch, short of "ditching" your American children in the airport while you and your wife and new African babies pretend to go duty-free shopping and race off to the jet instead. However, American teenagers currently find the idea of African bush life irresistibly romantic and anti-American, and it's highly likely that if arranged properly and strategically, a family trip to Africa could result in just such an exchange, leaving you and your wife to return home with your new African family, and your old children happily experiencing life in the Third World. Gradually, communications between you and your old children can be tapered off until they, in effect, become replaced by your new African children, allowing you to start fresh.

Q: Can I return my African baby?
A: Of course! Any African baby can be repatriated to its country and village of origin at any time 24 months after taking delivery. Repatriation and restocking fees apply.

Please feel free to contact the African Baby Acquisitions Strategy Team at any time for any questions you may have! We look forward to helping you acquire and publicize your new African Baby purchase!

Best Regards,
Your African Baby Acquisitions
Strategy Team members

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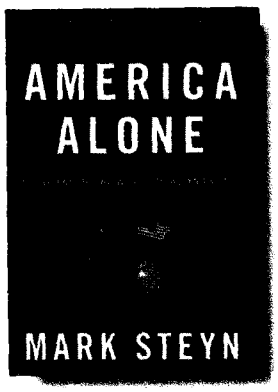
No Time to Go Wobbly



America Alone: The End of the World As We Know It, by Mark Steyn (Regnery, 256 pp., $27.95)

STANLEY KURTZ

"Live free or die; death is not the worst of evils." That 1809 message, sent by General John Stark to his Revolutionary War comrades 32 years after the battle of Bennington, is now New Hampshire's motto. Granite State resident Mark Steyn takes General Stark at his word. In contrast to the pampered charges of Europe's bloated nanny-state, says Steyn, only free and self-supporting citizens, willing to stand up and fight, have a shot at winning the existential struggle with radical Islam . . .

Wait a second: "have a shot"? Mark Steyn believes that the United States of America has only *a shot* at winning the War on Terror? Come off it. Steyn can't seriously believe the West might actually lose to the likes of Osama bin Laden and his pathetic suicide squadrons. Okay, maybe we're looking at years of scattered terrorist attacks and international police actions. But *lose?*

That is exactly what Mark Steyn believes. The West is losing the War on Terror, Europe as we know it is fated to disappear, and a stranded America is going to be lucky to pull out a victory in the struggle for its cultural and physical existence. Yes, that Mark Steyn. The funny one. You want funny? Then by all means read Steyn's book. The jokes are all there, along with Steyn's dazzling trademark wordplay, and the usual switchblade putdowns. But when it comes to Mark Steyn, funny's just another word for sad, smart, scary, and (unfortunately) largely true.

Europe defeated, neutralized, locked in an open and bloody civil war, and effectively enabling the world's Islamists in their quest to destroy the United States: Think about that scenario for as long as it takes to get past the schadenfreude, and weep. Weep for us, and for them (because despite our spats, we are still Europeans). The collapse of the West's own homeland is almost too horrible to contemplate. Yet it is happening before our eyes.

Europe's ever-deepening surrender to radical Islam is a tribute to the emptiness of multicultural ideology, to the disabling effects of the welfare state, and, above all, to the power of demography—the last of which, Steyn cautiously notes, accounts for a good 90 percent of everything. European fertility rates have fallen to unprecedented levels. The population of the developed nations was once twice as large as the Muslim world (30 percent to 15 percent of global population). By 2000 we were even, at 20 percent apiece. And in 20 more years? Steyn points out that on current trends, by mid-century, tiny Yemen will have more people than a vast and empty Russia. Already, in France's larger urban centers, up to 45 percent of the population under 20 is Muslim. Before risking death for freedom's sake, you must first be born.

Steyn lays out the consequences of these fearsome demographic facts. Millions of now-teenage Muslims will shortly be entering Europe's voting booths. So we'll soon see the rise of Islamist political parties, which will share Osama's Islamicizing goals, if not his tactics. A Europe where Muslims already exercise a virtual foreign-policy veto will be intimidated and broken by the duo of terrorist Islamist "bad cops" and peacefully political Islamist "good cops." After all, terrorists have already toppled one European government (Spain). That, says Steyn, is the merest beginning.

Even now, sections of France where Muslims dominate have turned into "no go" zones for police and firemen. For their physical and psychological safety, Western women living in heavily Muslim urban centers are beginning to walk about covered. A few Westerners are even converting. And Steyn believes that as Europeans face the prospect of living as a frightened minority in Muslim-dominated cities, more Western converts will follow. Bereft of cultural confidence and lacking the will to fight, Europe is assimilating to its immigrants.

Impossible? Well, Steyn is never more persuasive than when he cites his nemesis, Euro-liberal Timothy Garton Ash. In Garton Ash's scenario, by 2025, an aging Europe will be desperately in need of Muslim immigrants to support its pensioners. Speaking for Europe's petrified (i.e., "multiculturalist") leaders, Garton Ash says it would be a mistake even to try to bring these immigrants into a European cultural framework. On the contrary, he argues, Europe and the Muslim world will have to enter into a "great arc of partnership." So in Europe, cultural appeasement is the order of the day.

The demographic disaster has only just begun, and already the English national flag (which features the "crusader" cross of St. George) has been banned in British prisons. Steyn reminds us that America's colonists pledged to resist "the first unjust demands of an encroaching power," lest a succession of "convenient" concessions prove "fatal to public liberty." But that was General Stark's old New Hampshire. In the new Hampshire, the new Brussels, and the new Paris, we're seeing an endless train of small and "convenient" concessions. At this rate, says Steyn, Osama bin Laden won't need to march in triumph down the Champs-Elysées. A decade or so down the road, he and his only somewhat less ornery fellow travelers will have Islamified Europe piecemeal. In Steyn's words, "The last people around in any numbers will determine the kind of society we live in, and right now the last people around Europe will be Muslim." With Mr. Ash running Europe's assimilation project, time is not on our side.

As the world's most advanced demo-

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graphic basket case, Russia, already barely able to raise an army to defend its borders, is likely to lose large chunks of its territory to China on one hand, and to a succession of new Islamic states carved out of its decaying carcass on the other. Steyn reminds us that this means still more nukes floating around the Middle East. As far as the Islamists are concerned, Steyn informs us, it was they—and not the U.S.—who won the Cold War. American money and technology may have helped push the Soviets over the edge, but the Islamist fighting spirit in Afghanistan delivered the death blow. Absent a willingness to risk death for freedom, our money and technology will avail us nothing when our paid assassin wheels round from his Soviet victim and turns the knife on us. Russia's but one example. Simply as a matter of fact, says Steyn, every year more of the world lives under Islamic law.

In short, jihad can win. Nor is Steyn shy about dating the apocalypse. Steyn expects an implosion of the welfare state, societal collapse, fascist revivalism, and bloody civil unrest in a semi-Islamic Europe within a generation, with much of the change emerging within the next ten to fifteen years, if not sooner. Add terrorist nuclear strikes to this scenario. And here's a new one: Steyn predicts freelance nuclear attacks against Middle Eastern countries by independent actors in the West (should Western governments refuse to retaliate against Middle Eastern states for terrorist nukes).

All this makes Steyn the new anti-Fukuyama. *America Alone* is Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" cubed. Huntington envisioned relatively stable ongoing conflict between well-established civilizational zones. Steyn is talking about the collapse of the European heart of the West, and even its partial recruitment to the Islamist camp.

About a month after 9/11, Francis Fukuyama responded to claims that the terror attack had falsified his "end of history" thesis, and validated Huntington's "clash" instead. Fukuyama dismissed Islamist terror as a futile rearguard action by traditionalists hoping to derail the unstoppable "freight train" of modernity. "I see no lack of a will to prevail in the United States today," said Fukuyama. Democracy, Fukuyama noted, is spreading to more and more parts of the world. Immigrants flood the West and "eventually assimilate to Western values." Above all, insisted Fukuyama, Islamism has "virtually no appeal in the contemporary world apart from those who are culturally Islamic to begin with." Besides, Fukuyama assured us, modern Islamic societies simply aren't viable.

In effect, *America Alone* provides an answer to each of Fukuyama's post-9/11 claims. Half the West is already doomed, says Steyn, which will leave America isolated and vulnerable. Europe's will is broken, while America's fighting spirit is halfway out the window. Democracy may spread—and must spread—says Steyn, as our only shot at stopping a rapidly proliferating Islamism. Yet the West's watery multiculturalism has proven incapable of inspiring loyalty among immigrants, who are assimilating Europe to Islam instead. Even if only Muslims are radicalized, their numbers are large enough to defeat us. And given those numbers, and the resulting cultural pressures, the small stream of Western converts could someday become a rushing river. On one point, Steyn would agree with Fukuyama. An Islamic Republic of France or an Islamic States of America would not be a viable society. Unfortunately, we know that "History" has proven all too eager to waste precious human lives and decades on dangerous and ultimately non-viable social experiments.

Steyn is talking about the collapse of the European heart of the West, and even its partial recruitment to the Islamist camp.

So have we left Fukuyama's "End of History" for Mark Steyn's "New Dark Age"? Unfortunately, we're much too close to Steyn's frightening vision for comfort. Yet therein, says Steyn, lies our hope. The horrors playing out in Europe may wake up what's left of the West to the real alternatives, to wit: live free or die. **NR**

The Souls of American Folk

Enough: The Phony Leaders, Dead-End Movements, and Culture of Failure That Are Undermining Black America—and What We Can Do About It, by Juan Williams (Crown, 256 pp., $25)

ABIGAIL THERNSTROM

I DOUBT Juan Williams likes the company he seems to be keeping these days. His new book, *Enough*, appears to be selling well. But get on Amazon and look at its list of other books bought by the readers who have purchased *Enough*. Among the authors are Ann Coulter, Patrick Buchanan, and Shelby Steele—hardly his crowd.

Williams is a senior correspondent for NPR and a strong liberal voice on Fox News. And yet he's poured his heart and soul into delivering a heroic message that is deeply at odds with dug-in liberal orthodoxy. (Or rather, with the orthodoxy of the chattering classes; ordinary black folks are another story.) As Williams himself has said, "You become some sort of leper if you don't lock-step your opinions in line with white liberals.

Abigail Thernstrom is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, and author most recently (with Stephan Thernstrom) of *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning.*

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> Back in the Cold War, whenever I had to review an unreadable book, I always comforted myself with the thought, 'Maybe the Russians will drop the Bomb and I won't have to finish reading this.' Those were the days. This time, stuck with *A Pilgrim's Way: The Personal Story of the Episcopal Bishop Charged with Heresy for Ordaining a Gay Man Who Was in a Committed Relationship*, by the Rt. Rev. Walter C. Righter, author of the longest subtitle in publishing history, all I could hope for was an asteroid.

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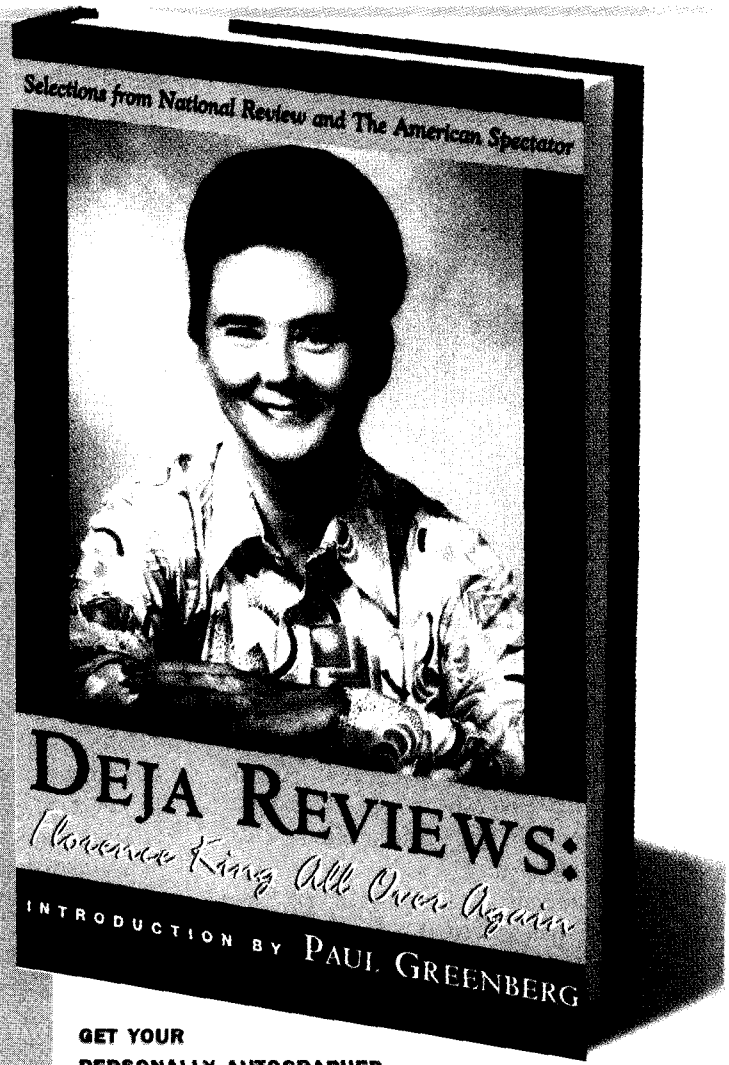
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They run the programming of CBS, NBC, and ABC, and they don't want you to rock the boat of received opinion."

Enough is a brave and wonderful book. It is also rather unusual; in effect, Bill Cosby is the co-author. I cannot think of another work quite like it. Williams is Cosby's translator. As he acknowledges, his aim is to explain and defend The Cos, who gives speeches but does not write. Cosby is a beloved actor and comedian. But on May 17, 2004, in a speech to a glittering black-tie crowd celebrating the Golden Anniversary of *Brown* v. *Board*, he wasn't funny and endearing. He delivered remarks from which his old friends in the civil-rights community (who have been substantial beneficiaries of his philanthropic largesse) have yet to recover.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "the lower-economic and lower-middle-economic people are not holding their end in this deal"—the deal being rights, accompanied by responsibility. Too many young men are dropping out of school, fathering children from whom they "run away," and populating prisons. "We cannot blame white people," he went on; the problem is the underclass culture. "Everybody knows it's important to speak English except these knuckleheads. . . . These people are fighting hard to be ignorant."

It was a speech full of anger—and pain. The civil-rights community was not amused. Up on the podium after the speech, its representatives looked "stone-faced." University of Pennsylvania professor Michael Eric Dyson, in a fury shared by other black academics, decided to write an entire book titled, *Is Bill Cosby Right? Or Has the Black Middle Class Lost Its Mind?* "In its views of the poor and its support of Cosby's sentiments, [it has] lost its mind," he concluded.

Dyson is right to say that many in the black middle class have long been disturbed by the social impropriety of the impoverished, and Cosby's speech did expose historic tensions. Richard Wright's *Native Son* began to be published in serialized form in a Harlem newspaper, but its depiction of the violence and sexuality of Bigger Thomas was deeply upsetting to the paper's audience, and the book was dropped like a hot potato. W. E. B. Du Bois famously talked of nurturing the black "talented tenth" but (although this is almost unknown) he also spoke of the "debauched tenth." Dyson writes that Cosby was repeating things that blacks had long said to each other, out of white earshot. But private talk is private. It has never inspired middle-class mobilization for cultural change—and that is clearly what Cosby wants.

And it's clearly what Juan Williams hopes for as well. Indeed, he describes Cosby's speech as setting "the agenda for civil rights in the twenty-first century." *Enough* is a powerful gloss on Cosby's views.

Here is the essence of the argument that Williams lays out. Once upon a time, the leading black spokesmen in America (Douglass, Washington, and Du Bois, for instance) believed in black self-determination. Part of the genius of black life in America, writes Williams, has come down "to our ability to make something out of nothing, 'a way out of no way.'" God helps those who help themselves. It is a "sin" to lose track of that truth.

Today, however, civil-rights leaders offer nothing but a "tired rant . . . about the power of white people." They depict blacks as "hapless victims waiting for . . . white guilt to bail them out"—"an inferior, weak people who are still flat on their backs, permanently defeated by the damage done by slavery several generations ago." And yet to argue that today's poverty is the consequence of yesterday's slavery is to rob poor blacks of "all of their personal will, diminish their independence, and dismiss their intellect." And it is also to neglect the fact that "most black Americans do not live in poverty, are not in jail, and reign as the wealthiest black people in the world."

Why don't black leaders tell poor black families that they have the power to improve the education their kids are receiving? And why don't they, along with "black parents, black church people and schoolteachers, tell these black children to stop selling crack cocaine?" Instead, they make excuses for black criminals, which "amounts to a deal with the devil for black families and black neighborhoods." And they tolerate gangster rap as "authentically black," despite its "deluge of guns, half-naked women, and odes to quickie sex, interspersed with advertisements for alcohol."

Should blacks be telling their children that they are "weaker than any Bosnian refugee recently uprooted by genocide . . . any one of the 'Lost Boys of the Sudan,' thousands of miles from home and culture, but working to adjust in a land free of tyranny"? America is the land of opportunity, and yet too many blacks live "as if they were locked out from all America has to offer."

Civil-rights leaders, says Williams, imply that whites have all the power, and that government needs to increase social spending. And yet demanding "bigger budgets for programs that show no sign of working" is nothing but "a tired failed strategy" that "encourages patterns of dependence." The alternative: Tell parents they need to monitor the education of their children, oversee their homework, and make sure they are off to school in the morning, rested and ready to learn. And tell kids that the Charles Murray formula, first laid out in 1986, was right. The route out of poverty is simple: finish high school, take a job and hold on to it, marry when you have an education and a job, have children only after you are 21 and married.

Cosby broke a black code of near-silence in the public arena, and Williams has followed up with a passionate book. But the "phony leaders" of "dead-end movements" are not likely to heed their clarion call. Why should they? Their status as spokesmen for the alleged victims of persistent racism and their exploitation of boundless white guilt is their explicitly acknowledged ticket to survival. The agenda for reform that Cosby and Williams lay out is not new, but they are newcomers to the cause.

Maybe their voices will make a real difference. But it seems doubtful. Juan Williams may think he and Cosby are uniquely positioned to reach an audience that reflexively rejects precisely their ideas when those ideas are articulated by black and white conservatives. But with their emphasis on American opportunity, personal responsibility, and the criminal negligence of today's civil-rights leaders, they have crossed the hard line that separates the Left and Right on issues of race. Like it or not, Williams has joined the "lepers." Welcome, Juan! I like your company. **NR**

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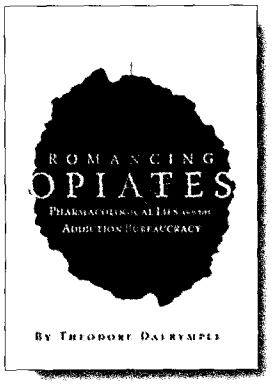
Talking Smack



Romancing Opiates: Pharmacological Lies and the Addiction Bureaucracy, by Theodore Dalrymple (Encounter, 165 pp., $21.95)

JACOB SULLUM

A NEW ad campaign from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America insists that "drug addiction is a disease." In fact, say the ads, addiction is *worse* than a disease, because people are not inclined to sympathize with addicts, viewing excessive drug taking as voluntary behavior rather than a condition requiring medical attention. The "Hope, Help, and Healing" campaign tries to correct that perception: In a TV spot and a series of print ads, shirtless addicts of various ages, sexes, and colors declare they'd be "better off" with a brain tumor, cancer, AIDS, or heart disease.

People with brain tumors, cancer, AIDS, or heart disease might disagree. So would Theodore Dalrymple, who has encountered many heroin addicts in his work as a psychiatrist and prison doctor in the U.K. Although he initially accepted the official view of addiction, his professional experiences led him to conclude that addiction is a moral and spiritual problem demanding deliberate changes in behavior, not an illness demanding treatment. In *Romancing Opiates*, a breezy, brave, and bracing assault on his own profession's pseudoscientific pretensions, Dalrymple concisely debunks the disease model of addiction, doing for the heroin habit what the philosopher Herbert Fingarette did for alcoholism in his similarly slim volume *Heavy Drinking*. Dalrymple also enthusiastically attacks a literary tradition, beginning with Thomas De Quincey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge, that overdramatizes the pleasures of opiates and the pains of withdrawal, bolstering the disease model by depicting the addict as a passive victim of pharmacological slavery.

Dalrymple is by no means the first to question this understanding of addiction, and it's a little odd that he does not mention American critics of the disease model such as Thomas Szasz, Stanton Peele, and Jeffrey Schaler. (He does cite Fingarette.) Still, his mordant criticism of the drug-treatment establishment, which he accuses of ignoring easily observed facts to preserve its own legitimacy and funding, is generally well-deserved. So is his scathing indictment of De Quincey, Coleridge, and their literary successors for exaggerating the allure of opiates while preemptively excusing those who succumb to it.

But Dalrymple is curiously quiet on the connection between addiction mythology and drug prohibition, which reinforce each other. Although he emphatically denies that heroin is irresistible and concedes that its illicit status makes it more appealing to many, he seems to fear that decriminalization would lead to widespread addiction. That a determined debunker of opiophobia cannot quite escape its influence is testimony to the powerful grip that heroin has on the minds of people who have never even taken it.

According to the conventional view, people who try heroin are quickly "hooked," compelled to continue taking it by the unbearable agony of withdrawal. Although Dalrymple focuses on drug-influenced Romantics and 20th-century countercultural writers such as William S. Burroughs, this portrayal of heroin addiction as inevitable and inescapable also suffuses movies, TV shows, journalistic accounts of drug use, "drug education" in public and private schools, and government-sponsored anti-drug ads.

Dalrymple offers one example after another that contradicts the official account. He describes histrionic addicts, writhing in apparent pain, who complain of horrible discomfort in the presence of doctors from whom they hope to obtain narcotics but act normally both before the visit and after. He notes experiments in which withdrawal symptoms were eliminated with placebo injections of saline solution. He cites the experiences of patients who repeatedly receive large doses of narcotics for pain yet rarely become addicted and of Vietnam veterans who used heroin regularly during the war but gave it up, without any need for "treatment," when they returned home. He observes that addicts stop using heroin when they have a strong enough motive to do so—a kind of spontaneous recovery through will power that is not often seen in cases of cancer or heart disease.

Medical texts agree that the physical symptoms caused by abrupt withdrawal of opiates are not life-threatening and at their worst resemble the flu. Moreover, says Dalrymple, there seems to be little connection between the severity of these symptoms and the intensity of an addict's complaints, which for the most part can be understood as manipulative faking or distress at losing a psychological crutch. "That withdrawal from opiates is not a serious medical condition is a truth universally acknowledged by doctors," he writes, "but it is also a truth universally ignored, or whose significance is not much reflected on."

Just as the difficulty of giving up a heroin habit is routinely exaggerated, so is the ease of acquiring one. "You have to work quite hard to become a bona fide heroin addict," Dalrymple says. "Indeed, there are many careers entry into which is far less exacting." He notes that many people who use heroin do so only occasionally. In fact, to judge by the U.S. government's own survey data, the vast majority of people who try heroin (a small percentage of the population to begin with) either never use it again, use it just a few times, or use it intermittently. Even among heroin users, the heroin addict is the exception.

This is a point Dalrymple, who condemns heroin use as an attempt "to obscure life's existential difficulties, dissatisfactions, and terrors by means of chemically induced oblivion," should have discussed more thoroughly. He notes that De Quincey, in addition to claiming that opium is intellectually and spiritually uplifting, offered "a defense of self-

Mr. Sullum, a senior editor at *Reason* and a syndicated columnist, is the author of *Saying Yes: In Defense of Drug Use*.

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NR's New Classic Children's Book

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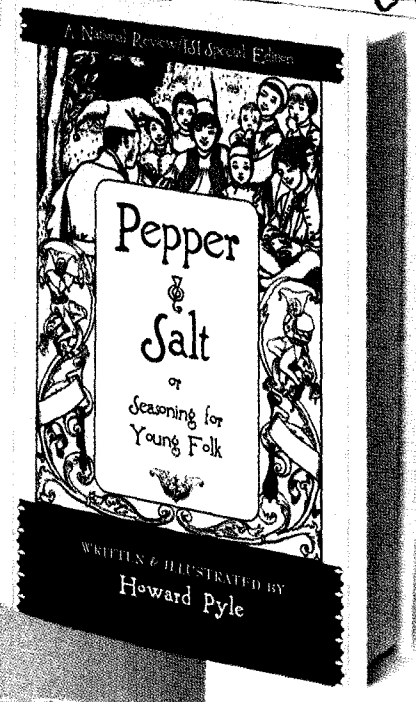
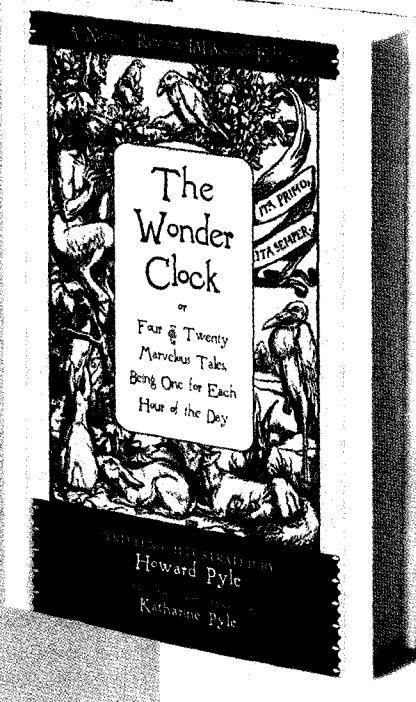




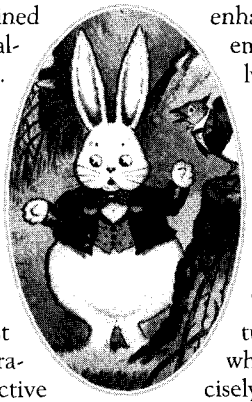
National Review and the Intercollegiate Studies Institute are proud to announce the publication of three wonderful new books—lavishly illustrated collections of wholesome and trustworthy tales that will delight anyone aged 8 to 80!—that are *musts* for every family's library, and wonderful gifts for deserving sons, daughters, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews.

Two of these precious books—*The Wonder Clock* and *Pepper & Salt*—are the work of the great Howard Pyle (1853–1911). Regarded as one of America's great illustrators and founder of the influential "Brandywine School," Pyle first gained renown for his self-illustrated serialized children's stories published in *St. Nicholas Magazine* and other major publications.

But he became hugely popular in 1887 when, in conjunction with his sister Katharine, he wrote and illustrated *The Wonder Clock*. Now nearly six-score years later, this groundbreaking collection is still considered to be one of the best works of American children's literature. Its 24 entertaining and instructive tales (including the famous "King Stork")—one for each hour of the day—overflow with fascinating characters, and are indescribably enhanced by Howard Pyle's powerful illustrations.

Any child will find this book a good friend. "I put on my dream-cap one day and stepped into Wonderland," Pyle writes in the Preface to *The Wonder Clock*. It is the first of many exciting steps he takes in this collection, and your child or grandchild will find it a true joy to be Pyle's companion on this most delightful of literary journeys!

The Wonder Clock is part of a convenient boxed set, joined by another of Pyle's famous works, *Pepper & Salt*. From within the cover of this unique book come the delicious and powerful fragrances of an entire spice shop. It is fair to say that this visually extravagant tome was not so much written by Howard Pyle, nor so much illustrated by him, as it was designed by him. It is a work of art.



Pepper & Salt is so special and so distinct that it will immediately capture the attention and the imagination of all, from children to adults. Two dozen beautiful and enchanting full-page fable-poems—mischievous, humorous, and instructive lessons adorned by Pyle's delightful line art and enhanced by his unique lettering—embrace *Pepper & Salt*'s eight finely told and lavishly illustrated tales.

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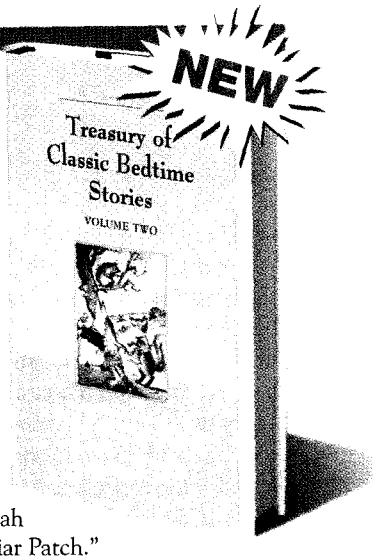

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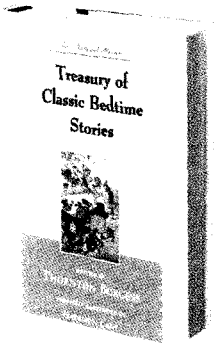

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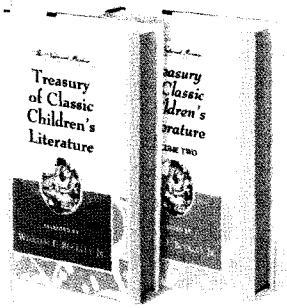

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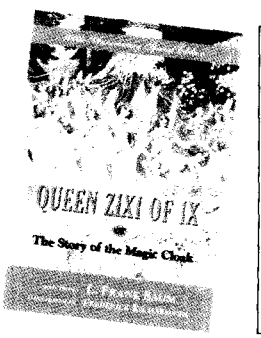

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indulgence, asking why, if it is permissible in the case of alcohol, it is not permissible in the case of opium." Dalrymple calls this "the question asked by libertarian theorists and practicing reprobates ever since," but he never tries to answer it. "The majority of people sometimes resort to intoxicants (or, like me with alcohol, resort to them every day) without letting them interfere with their ability to function in the real world," he concedes. "Indeed, taken in moderation, they probably increase their ability to do so." At the risk of sounding like De Quincey, I have to ask why Dalrymple's daily drink is morally and legally acceptable, while a daily puff of opium is not.

Dalrymple's failure to address this issue is especially striking because the myth he debunks in connection with opiates—the fear of irresistible chemicals that lead ineluctably to the disease of addiction—was associated with alcohol long before it was applied to opiates. As the sociologist Harry G. Levine has noted, "the idea that drugs are inherently addicting was first systematically worked out for alcohol and then extended to other substances. Long before opium was popularly accepted as addicting, alcohol was so regarded." This was the idea that drove the temperance movement's transition from moderation enforced by self-discipline to abstinence enforced by law: If alcohol was inherently addicting, voluntary temperance was a dangerous illusion. After the repeal of Prohibition, the view of alcoholism as a disease caused by alcohol gave way to a view of alcoholism as a condition that makes it impossible for certain susceptible individuals to drink moderately. Whatever its scientific weaknesses, this version of the disease model does not demand abstinence from all and is therefore much more compatible than the earlier version with a legal market in alcoholic beverages.

By contrast, heroin is still widely seen as a substance that causes addiction, as opposed to a drug that attracts some people in some circumstances, a small percentage of whom end up using it heavily. Although Dalrymple generally favors the latter view, he occasionally implies that heroin is universally appealing. He suggests, for example, that giving methadone to heroin addicts does not necessarily cause a net reduction in heroin use because dealers may simply find new customers. If it were that easy, heroin would have a much bigger market; instead it is a minority taste even among users of illegal drugs, who prefer marijuana by a factor of more than 50 to 1.

Dalrymple likewise seems to fear that legalizing heroin would lead to an explosion in addiction, a prediction that does not fit very well with his debunking of the drug's power to enslave. It certainly is plausible that overall use of opiates would rise if prohibition were repealed. But in cost-benefit terms, the crucial question is how much harm would be associated with that increase in use and whether it would outweigh the harm caused by prohibition. In his superficial, four-page discussion of drug legalization, Dalrymple assumes all drug use is harmful, and he underplays the costs of prohibition. Indeed, he implies that making drug use more dangerous—through unreliable quality, unpredictable doses, and unsanitary injection practices, not to mention the risks of violence and arrest—could be counted as a benefit of prohibition because of its deterrent effect.

Dalrymple criticizes "harm reduction" measures aimed at limiting the damage caused by heroin use, such as opiate prescriptions and the distribution of clean needles, for insulating addicts from the consequences of their behavior. "Harm reduction as a policy is inherently infantilizing," he writes. "It assumes that the authorities are, and ought to be, responsible for the ill-consequences of what people insist on doing." He says biomedical models of addiction are "dehumanizing because they reduce addicts to the status of mere physiological specimens or preparations in a laboratory." But laws that seek to regulate the chemicals in people's bloodstreams are even more infantilizing and dehumanizing, treating people not as independent moral agents but as children to be protected or automatons to be reprogrammed.

In the context of the war on drugs, in fact, the disease talk functions mainly as a cover for coercive paternalism, disguising punishment as medicine and putting a kinder, gentler face on forcible re-education. Dalrymple is right that people who use politically incorrect drugs should not be viewed as patients. Neither should they be viewed as criminals. **NR**

Getting Medieval

Mysteries of the Middle Ages: The Rise of Feminism, Science, and Art from the Cults of Catholic Europe, by Thomas Cahill (Nan A. Talese, 368 pp., $32.50)

SARAH BRAMWELL

LET me say right off that I had nothing against Thomas Cahill before reading *Mysteries of the Middle Ages*. I knew him only as the author of a bestselling middlebrow history book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*. As an occasional consumer of bestselling middlebrow history books (though not that particular one), I have never sniffed at contributions to the genre. If Cahill discovered that making a learned appeal to ethnic pride sells copies, well, then, bully for him.

Upon reading his latest, however, I cannot believe that this self-important windbag ever managed to find an audience, much less make a killing as a popular author. Perhaps Cahill so despises his readers that he enjoys subjecting them to hundreds of pages of unrelenting fatuousness—at least that would give his writing a Mephistophelean interest. I fear, however, that Cahill is all too sincere. If so, not only should you not buy this book, but you should warn everyone you know against doing so, lest the Cahill publishing juggernaut proceed any further. The sheer awfulness of this book beggars description.

First, the pages are littered with banalities offered as the profoundest wisdom. "Sex has never been absent from any age." "No one, whether Bush or bin Laden, has the right to blow up innocent civilians." Gee, thanks! I had been under the impression that sex was discovered in 1965 and that indiscriminate murder was, generally speaking, harmless fun: like roller skating. How fortunate we are, to have Cahill among us to debunk these popular myths.

Next come the atrocious anachronisms—beginning with the subtitle: "The rise of feminism . . . " I suppose one could

Sarah Bramwell is a writer living in New York City.

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forgive a writer for his book's subtitle—editors write them to appeal to buyers rather than readers of books. But Cahill seems honestly to believe that in every episode of history is a lesson not only about today, but even about how we should vote. "It is an axiom of history—which it would reward contemporary politicians to consider—that few human endeavors prove as pointless as projects of religiously inspired military idealism unaccompanied by worldly understanding, strategic thoughtfulness, and common sense." If only voters knew of Bernard of Clairvaux, they would never have elected George W. Bush. "[Constantine] even made the detested cross his royal symbol—as unusual a thing to do as would be, say, a governor of Texas electing to wear a tiny electric chair or a poison-filled hypodermic needle on a chain around his neck."

Next, Cahill appropriates all the great men and women of the Middle Ages—and there were many—for his own petulant purposes. Cahill on St. Francis: "'May the Lord give you peace' was the best greeting one could give to all one met. It compromised no one's dignity and embraced every good; it was a blessing to be bestowed indiscriminately. May the Lord give you peace, George and Jacques. May the Lord give you peace, Osama and Saddam. May the Lord give you peace, my annoying aunt. May the Lord give you peace, my unbearable neighbor. May the Lord give you peace, my loathsome enemy." Yup, that's the great Saint Francis, one part Kerry voter, one part Mr. Rogers.

Then we come to Cahill's actual historical judgments. I have nothing against opinionated historians—Paul Johnson comes to mind—but it helps when they at least give an impression that they are informed. When our author speaks *ex Cahill*, so to speak, however, he comes up with such Unassailable Truths as "Gregory was the greatest and most humane pope in history (at least till the appearance of John XXIII in 1958)" and Bernard of Clairvaux was a "sham saint." The evidence? Not much really, just that Cahill believes it, and therefore it must be true.

Finally, Cahill drips condescension, treating his readers as simply incapable of imagining a world different from their own. Cahill on the Old Testament Book of Wisdom: "This Book of Wisdom . . . [was] the granddaddy of all spirituality books, a sort of 'How to Love God and Still Be Cool by the Pool.'" His paraphrase of Hildegard's eloquent criticism of another nun: "Take that, bitch." No monument of our civilization is so great that Cahill will not want to scribble graffiti all over it in order to make it relevant to today's hip readers.

Mysteries of the Middle Ages has all the worst aspects of popular historical surveys (facile and overbroad conclusions, minor sins of omission) with none of the benefits—a linear sweep through time and the sense that one knows more after reading the book than before. Even if you wanted to try to learn something from Cahill, the book is almost impossible to read. Although he spends half of it explaining to the reader what he's trying to say, we are still lost amid the jumble of stories he tells. A good historian offers you a smooth ride; Cahill's has so many jerks as to induce motion sickness.

He admits as much midway through: "The Middle Ages are a great jumble. As I have put my manuscript together, I have sometimes felt I was not so much writing a book as sewing a gigantic quilt, full of disparate and even clashing remnants." Do you hear something? That's the sound of a historian giving up. Sure the Middle Ages are complex, multifarious, even a jumble, but what period of human history has *not* been complex? As far in as page 108, Cahill is still trying to explain "what we propose to do in this book."

To the extent that the book has a structure, it is a string of cursory biographies: Hildegard, Eleanor of Aquitaine, Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, and Dante, among others. He leaves out a lot of notables, but one can't fault a surveyor for a lack of comprehensiveness. Still, his choice of subjects is curious, and it is only in his odd four-page postlude (titled, in yet another fustian display of false erudition, "Love in the Ruins: A Dantesque Reflection") that Cahill lets the cat out of the bag: This little history of the Middle Ages has been designed to sell the reader on Cahill's radical agenda for fixing the Catholic Church.

His logic is not exactly ineluctable: "As the preceding chapters have demonstrated, it was not bishops but laypeople who were responsible for the historic glories of Catholicism, given as gifts to the Western world." (Such laymen as Gregory the Great?) Thus: "If this church is to survive it must return to the practices of its apostolic foundations, when celibacy was optional

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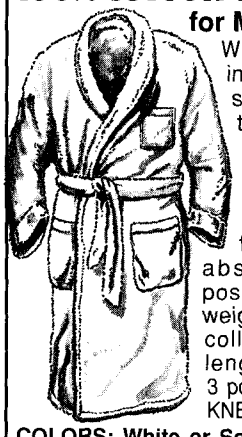

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and all clergy—from deacons to bishops (there were no cardinals or popes in those days) were chosen by the people. . . . The only hope is for an uprising of laypeople who refuse to be disfranchised serfs any longer. . . . 'The voice of the people is the voice of God.'"

This comes as a total non sequitur after all the stories of medieval genius and creativity, and I'm sure I won't be alone in feeling just a little bit used by the whole scheme.

I am immensely sympathetic to Cahill's quest to resurrect the reputation of the Middle Ages, blackened as it has been by arrogant, narrow Renaissance historians. But the way Cahill goes about it—drafting his favorite medievals into a war for his ideological agenda—inevitably butchers and cheapens history itself. Dante "would have found the United Nations, with all its flaws and limitations, closer to his ideal than would be any conceivable monarch"? Maybe Dante would have liked the U.N.; it's impossible to say and a useless exercise, adding nothing to our understanding. It can only serve to convince the author of his own righteousness. And history doesn't get any narrower or more arrogant than that.

Done well, popular history is the best kind of history. Unfortunately, *Mysteries of the Middle Ages* displays no more insight than an eighth-grade book report—ignorant, totally unoriginal—puffed up with a nauseating pretentiousness, right down to the cute little marginal designs that adorn the pages. Please, please do not read this book. **NR**

■ FILM ■

Crowd-Pleaser

ROSS DOUTHAT

Martin Scorsese has spent the 15 years since his career high, *Goodfellas*, making movies that consistently fascinate and just as consistently miss the mark. There are pleasures to be found in nearly every one of his recent films, but they've displayed the mix of hubris and fastidiousness that belongs to an artist working at the height of his ambitions but not the height of his powers. Scorsese has veered from the bloated overreach of *Gangs of New York* and *Casino* to the sterile perfectionism of *Kundun* or *The Age of Innocence*; his most recent effort, the Howard Hughes biopic *The Aviator*, was gorgeous, sweeping, and largely pointless, an epic treatment of an inconsequential life.

Now comes another Scorsese–Leonardo DiCaprio collaboration, *The Departed*, a remake of the Hong Kong classic *Infernal Affairs*, with the original's dueling double agents—one an undercover cop who's infiltrated the mob, the other a mob mole embedded in the police department—transplanted from Asia to Irish Boston. There's a moment, before the opening credits, when it looks like the movie is going to join the pantheon of Scorsese near-misses. First comes grainy 1970s footage of the Boston busing crisis, with a Rolling Stones song tearing up the soundtrack, and then Jack Nicholson's rasping voice starts in with some hard-boiled blarney about how the Irish took over Boston, and how "no one gives it to you; you have to take it." It's a sequence that makes you expect a big, doomed attempt to fashion a Gaelic *Goodfellas*, a Bostonian rehash of the hash that was *Gangs of New York*.

But *The Departed* has something less pretentious in mind, and the result is a movie that's good because it rarely tries too hard to be great. The plot is implausible; the characters are caricatures; Nicholson (playing Frank Costello, a murderous mobster based none-too-loosely on the notorious Whitey Bulger) chews the scenery and the rest of the cast tries to match him; and you never for a moment believe that this is how real Irish-American gangsters talk and walk, let alone how real elite police units operate. But neither do you care. Scorsese is playing the entertainer this time around, not the auteur, and the movie he's crafted here is the thinking man's popcorn film—a summer blockbuster shot with art-house craft, and graced with an Oscar-season script and cast.

DiCaprio and Matt Damon play the doppelganger leads—Leo as Billy Costigan, the hothead son of a baggage handler and a North Shore upper-cruster who gets tapped by the state police to infiltrate the Southie mob; Damon as Colin Sullivan, the crooked cop who feeds the department's secrets to Costello, his childhood mentor, while gazing ambitiously at the State House's golden dome. They're onscreen together only briefly, but they play off each other even so: DiCaprio is all id, a growling live wire who keeps his secrets but otherwise wears his heart on his sleeve, while Damon is the super-ego gone rotten, his surface charm and self-control hiding a snake's soul underneath.

The movie thrives on their mirror-image competition—not just because each one is charged with flushing out his opposite number, but because Costigan and Sullivan find themselves at war with each other in other ways as well. They

THE DRAGON

Because I could not hide my hatred
Of tattoos, the profanity of scribbling
On the skin nature had made perfect,
My eighteen-year-old son,
At the height of his rage against me,
Got a fire-breathing dragon sewn
On his back, its tail tipped with an arrow
Twisting back upon itself. He cannot see
That beast without turning upon himself.
The man who slays the dragon is a hero.
But what chance does he have
Who cannot look the monster in the eye?

—DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN

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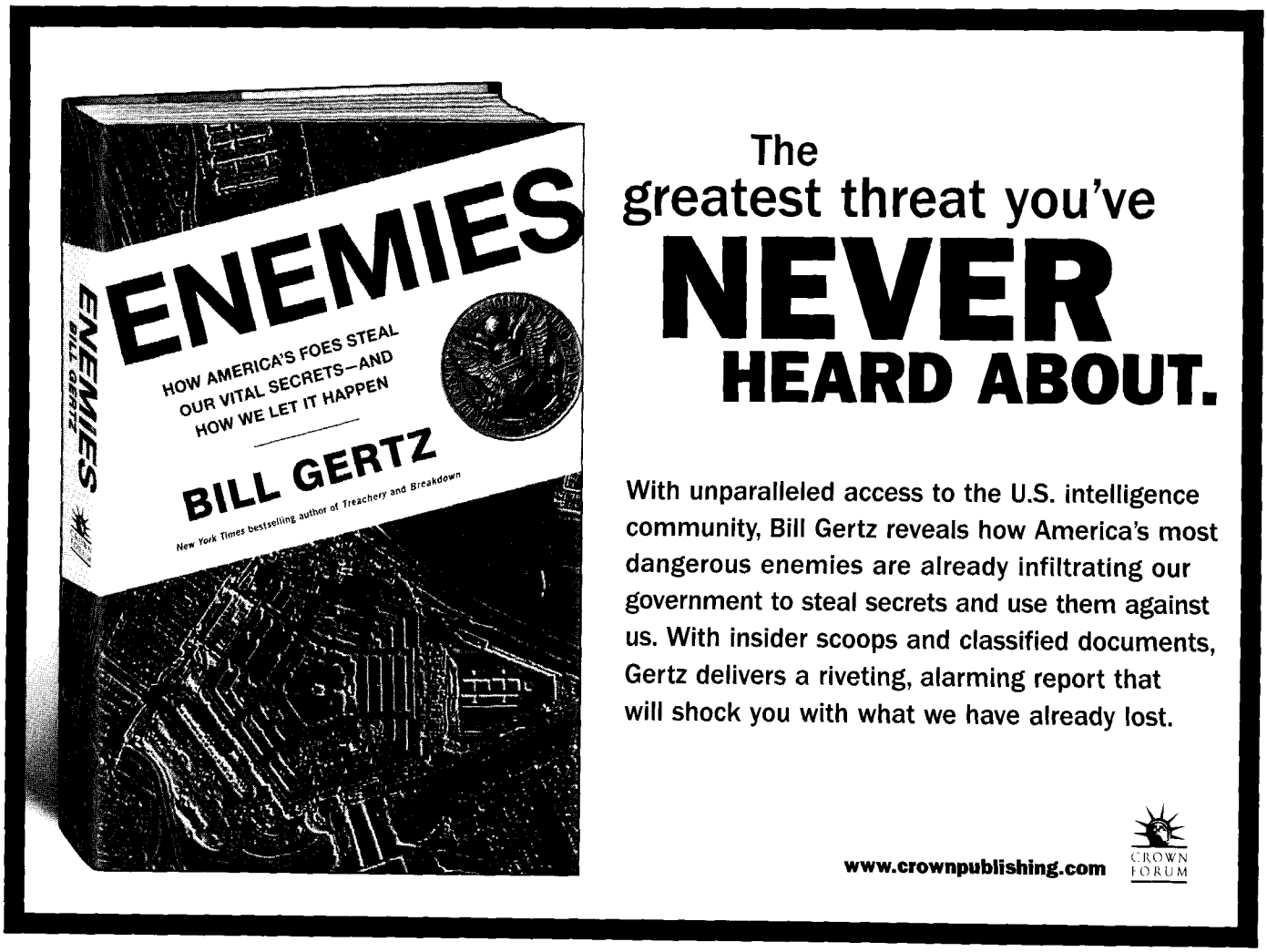
compete for the respect of the same police superiors (including Mark Wahlberg, stealing scenes as a hilariously profane sergeant), the favor of the same mobster father-figure (when Nicholson calls Damon at work, he answers the phone with a breezy "Hi, Dad"), and eventually, the affections of the same police psychologist. This romantic triangle is the movie's most predictable bit, but the love-interest role is hoisted out of cliché by the largely unknown Vera Farmiga, *The Departed*'s real casting coup. Farmiga has the long, strange face of a lovely giraffe, and she plays the shrink as a clever woman with a taste for self-immolation; she's saner and smarter than the nest of traitors, hotheads, and sociopaths who populate the rest of the film, but she's too turned on by them to leave well enough alone.

As she goes, so goes the audience: What we're watching is horrifying, but we wouldn't dream of looking away, and Scorsese's gliding camera gives us exactly the thrills we're hoping for. *The Departed* is less modern-day Shakespeare, in this sense, than updated Christopher Marlowe, or maybe John Webster: It's a ripe and bloody melodrama, not a tragedy, and it has all the strengths and weaknesses of the Jacobean stage. At times, the coincidences and implausibilities pile up so high that the suspension of disbelief begins to slip: You wouldn't last very long at the top of any crime racket, for instance, if you were as lousy at fingering a double agent as Frank Costello turns out to be; nor would you last long as an undercover cop if you persisted in text-messaging your handlers during high-stakes illegal arms deals. And while Nicholson's devilish performance—including waggling eyebrows and goatee, crossing his *Witches of Eastwick* Mephistopheles with *The Shining*'s Jack Torrance—is tremendous fun, there are moments when his ham's act threatens to eclipse the rest of the movie, just as Marlowe's outrageous villains often overwhelmed the plays they inhabited.

But the movie's pleasures far outstrip its faults. There's the dialogue, for instance, all curses and crackling insults, in which the occasional highbrow shout-out—to James Joyce, for instance, or to Freud's crack about the Irish being immune to psychoanalysis—feels organic rather than jarring, as it would in a weaker script. There are the supporting turns—not only Wahlberg and Farmiga but Alec Baldwin, playing to type as a rumpled, dissipated police captain, and David O'Hara and Ray Winstone, as Costello's frighteningly good-humored lieutenants. And above all, there's the violence—anticipated, avoided, and then meted out in a dizzying series of executions, until the movie's stage is littered with corpses and Scorsese has proved once again what the old playwrights knew so well: Death is the ultimate crowd-pleaser. **NR**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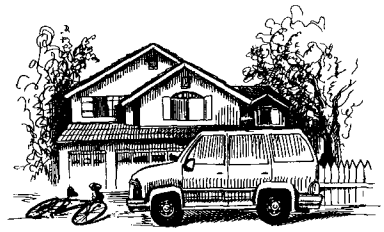
■ THE STRAGGLER ■

Numbering The Nation



JOHN DERBYSHIRE

When Mr. Johnson felt his fancy, or fancied he felt it, disordered, his constant recurrence was to the study of arithmetic, and one day that he was totally confined to his chamber, and I inquired what he had been doing to divert himself, he showed me a calculation which I could scarce be made to understand, so vast was the plan of it, and so very intricate were the figures: no other, indeed, than that the national debt, computing it at one hundred and eighty millions sterling, would, if converted into silver, serve to make a meridian of that metal, I forgot how broad, for the globe of the whole earth, the real globe.

—Mrs. Thrale's *Anecdotes*

JUST so with the humble Straggler. If the Census Bureau is to be believed, the resident population of these United States has just passed through the 300 million mark. Reading of this, my fancy became disordered, driving me to seek refuge in arithmetic. Here I shall try to reconstruct my train of thought.

There seems to be no mood of national rejoicing for this demographic milestone, as there was back in 1967 when the "census clock" in the Commerce Department registered 200 million. On that occasion, a crowd in the lobby of the building broke into cheers and applause, and Lyndon Johnson made a celebratory speech.

What was not to like? The Americans of 1967 believed their nation to be a good one, so that the more populous she became, the better for humanity. They did not worry about "diversity," separation, and social discord between groups. Why should they? There were only two distinct groups of any numerical consequence: white Americans at 88.6 percent of the population and black Americans at 10.5 percent (on the 1960 census figures). The number for white Americans was actually an advance of 8 percentage points on the 1790 figure, when almost one in five of the inhabitants of the Thirteen Colonies was black. In any case, when the 200 millionth American showed up, the civil rights revolution was under way. Everyone knew that once legal disabilities against them had been swept aside, black Americans would merge peacefully into the general mass of citizens, and race would soon be of interest only to the manufacturers of cosmetic products. We should be a single harmonious nation, marching forward to a radiant future, our alabaster cities gleaming in the sun, our numbers ever swelling!

We have lost a great deal of innocence since 1967, become wiser and more thoughtful. We are less trustful of government and its statistics, too. Is the Census Bureau to be believed? There are demographers who think not. There is, for instance, Virginia Abernethy, professor emerita of anthropology at Vanderbilt. Professor Abernethy believes that the 300 million mark was actually passed six years ago, and that present population is about 327 million. She has published a paper to make her argument. She also questions the estimates of *future* population put out by the feds. The Census Bureau currently anticipates a U.S. population of 600 million at the end of this century. That, notes Professor Abernethy, is already 100 million greater than the 1994 estimate. She thinks the true end-century number might be over 800 million. Who knows? As the late Sen. Everett Dirksen would have said: "A hundred million here, a hundred million there, pretty soon you're talking real population."

Let us give our Census Bureau the benefit of the doubt and assume that the 300 millionth resident has indeed just shown up. Let us also set aside the rancorous arguments about whether 300 million is a good number or a bad number, a number to be praised or cursed. Let us, like the great Dr. Johnson, soothe ourselves with arithmetic. What kind of number is it, this 300 million?

Back in my schoolteaching days, I took great pleasure in making visual aids for my pupils. Finding myself at one school in charge of a class of twelve-year-old boys, I decided that they needed to *see* a million of something. To give them that something, I cut up a few pages from a pad of metric graph paper ruled in millimeters. A million square millimeters occupy a square one meter—just over a yard—on a side. Pasting a dozen or so pages of graph paper onto a makeshift cardboard backing did the trick very nicely. My million-square display also made for a nice learning-through-punishment opportunity: Class malefactors were set to placing neat dots into squares, under the ultimate threat, which I think some of them actually believed, that all million squares might be assigned as penalty for some really serious offense.

To extend that particular display to 300 million would require covering all the walls of half a dozen fair-sized classrooms with graph paper. Faced with difficulties of this sort, the nimble mathematician just goes up a dimension. The cube root of 300 million being around 670, you could get 300 million grains of household salt into a cubic box eight inches on a side, though of course you wouldn't be able to *see* more than a few hundred thousand of the little devils.

If you were to pack actual human beings instead of salt grains, a cubic crate just 733 yards on a side would offer a roomy cubicle 6 ft. by 3 ft. by 2 ft. to each of the 300 million. We are not really talking about a big crate there—it would be lost in the Grand Canyon. Replacing each human being by an identically sized replica made of peanut butter (the creamy, not the crunchy, sort) and spreading us evenly over the territory of the 48 contiguous states, our aggregate volume of 26 million cubic yards would spread as a layer only one ten-thousandth of an inch thick, 50 times thinner than a sheet of paper.

Passing from volume to area, if we were all skinned, and our skins—suitably cured, one hopes—were stitched together to make a quilt, it would just fit within the city limits of Tucson, Ariz. Switching now to linear, our aggregate length runs to over a quarter-million miles. Laid out head to toe along the 12,108-mile perimeter of the 48 states, we'd be stacked 20 deep. We'd be a tad more comfortable laid out along the 47,000 miles of the interstate highway system, stacked only five deep. Our alimentary tracts, removed from our bodies and stretched out . . . NR

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on the right

WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

Making Way for Jihad

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 29

THE categorical opponents of the detainee bill should spend an unhappy hour reading the new book by Mary Habeck. She is a scholar at the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins whose book, *Knowing the Enemy*, is subtitled *Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror*. It undertakes to tell the reader things about the jihadist offensive which we should know about and take into account when weighing legislative initiatives.

The scene in Washington was as follows. The president, commander in chief of our army, navy, and air force and, as such, principal agent of the national security, took to Congress an impasse. It had been created by the Supreme Court. Exercising its authority to opine on deviations from past constitutional practice having to do with human rights, the Court ruled that we could not legitimately proceed, as we have been doing in Guantanamo, to detain foreigners for interrogation and other purposes without reference to such constitutional narrative as is implicit under habeas corpus. That doctrine specifies that the American citizen is the master of his own movements—putting the burden of respecting that sovereignty on the government.

The protection of habeas corpus does not necessarily extend to those who are not U.S. citizens. The Geneva Conventions are designed to shed light on the standing of foreigners who find themselves behind bars set up by the U.S. army. The conventions cited are inadequate to current purposes, because they sought to illuminate our authority over persons who had served in armies against which the U.S. contended in war.

The problem crystallized soon after 9/11, namely what do we call people who are suspected of participating in activity mortal to U.S. interests, but who do not wear any chevron of allegiance to a formal foreign body. President Bush took what can perhaps be criticized as the easiest way out—he simply assumed authority over them. Moreover, he went further than merely detaining them. Many were suspected of being privy to organized activity against us. Some of these suspects have been handled, we are led to believe, in ways that would not be tolerated in the handling of orthodox prisoners. Necessarily, with the intervention of the Supreme Court, we needed to come up with a vocabulary appropriate to the challenge. This, Congress has decided, can be effected by a new nomenclature. It would continue to give the U.S. army authority to detain suspects and to interrogate them vigorously, though not brutally, in the effort to contain the terrorist movement.

How is that movement relevant? "The question of offensive jihad is . . . complex and controversial," writes Habeck. "The most widely respected Islamic authorities . . . all assume that Muslims have a duty to spread the dominion of Islam, through military offensives, until it rules the world. By the 'dominion of Islam' these authorities did not mean that everyone in the world must convert to Islam, since they also affirmed that 'there is no compulsion in religion,' rather that every part of the earth must come under Islamic governance and especially the rule of the sharia. Azzam's definition of offensive jihad [Azzam is the principal modern theorist of militant Islam] follows this traditional understanding of jihad, noting that it is the duty for the leader of the Muslims 'to assemble and send out an army unit into the land of war once or twice every year.'"

The jihadist is obliged to perform "until there remain only Muslims or people who submit to Islam." The author reminds us that Azzam's explanation of offensive jihad is "a recounting of the interpretations of the most respected traditional Islamic authorities. To deny this fact would be to deny one of the main reasons that jihadis have gotten a hearing in so much of the Islamic world today."

It is clearly wrong to assume that every Muslim is a jihadist. But it is also wrong to assume that every jihadist is heretical to his faith; and we end with real questions about how to deal with real people whom we catch with gunpowder stains on their dishdasha. We have gone through a conventional constitutional modification, in the evolution of our commitment to prevail over the jihadists, and we need not apologize for it.

Democrats without a Home

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 6

DEMOCRATS concerned about the 2008 elections will be looking closely at the midterm elections. Hard thought upon these elections tells us interesting things, salient among them that there is no policy extant, among Democratic leaders, on which strategic political building can be done with any confidence.

Peter Beinart, shining young light of *The New Republic*, scolded Democratic leaders in Congress recently for carrying on stupidly when Prime Minister Maliki of Iraq came to town. What provoked the Democratic leadership was his rebuking Israel for the extremity of the war in Lebanon. What he had done, Beinart explained in the *Washington Post*, was to speak as a Middle Eastern leader of a predominantly Shiite country. Maliki's criticism of Israel's war against Hezbollah had several objectives, but one of them was to voice a position on U.S. foreign policy a little less slavish in the matter of Israel than that of the Anti-Defamation League. Beinart was objecting to the threat by House minority leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate minority leader Harry Reid to rescind the invitation to Maliki to address Congress. The Democrats were purporting to instruct Maliki on how to "play a constructive role" in the Middle East. But Reid's letter, writes Beinart, "wasn't really about strengthening the Iraqi government at all; that's George W. Bush's problem. It was about appearing more pro-Israel than the White House and thus pandering to Jewish voters."

The flurry is one of many that will happen before there is anything that can be classified as consolidated Democratic policy on Iraq. "The Democratic party's

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single biggest foreign policy liability is not that Americans think Democrats are soft. It is that Americans think Democrats stand for nothing, that they have no principles beyond political expedience."

The final public evaluation of our Iraq venture probably will not be fully illuminated until the 2008 election season. But coming very soon is a clue to national Democratic orientation. It is the election contest in Connecticut next month featuring Joe Lieberman, deposed Democratic standard bearer, and Ned Lamont, who opposes the entire Iraq undertaking.

What can't easily be foretold is how the Democrats in 2008 will get around to formulating a foreign policy on the shaky legs of their pronouncements as enunciated in the years since 9/11. Consider one derivative problem they face. If the defense of Israel is accepted as an inflexible commitment, then the health of the U.S. military in the Mideast is a concern that goes beyond merely the replacement of Saddam Hussein. If Iran, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq evolve as a support system of radical Islamist mobilization concentrating on the elimination of Israel, friends of Israel can't be expected to ignore the consequences of U.S. inertia in the Mideast.

Democratic policy for 2008 has to go a step further than mere expressions of disapproval of Bush. Yet anti-Bushism is about the only plank of existing Democratic policy at this point. Critics can counter and say that the Republican party is itself without strategic definition. The Universal Emancipation Proclamation of President Bush, as enunciated in his second inaugural address, is going to leave candidates for political office in great difficulty when explaining what it is the GOP wants to accomplish.

Add to this the great big hole in Republican domestic orientation. The record of the Bush administration in spending and in advancing the social agenda leaves the Democrats with not much room to position themselves as the party of social concern. There isn't much left to advance after the GOP policies of No Pimple Left Behind. The result is that Democratic strategists haven't any clear goal to associate themselves with. That's why we hear nothing much more than that Bush and his legions must be replaced.

So? Hate Bush.

Is that truly enough as the agenda of the Democratic party?

Diplomacy Hits Kim

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 13

KIM JONG IL never lets us down. When President Bush announced that he would seek further sanctions against North Korea, Kim replied that he would interpret any such move as an act of belligerency warranting a declaration of war against the U.S. This would be opéra bouffe, the equivalent of Monaco announcing that it would bring down the Federal Reserve—except for the item that calls Kim to the world's attention, namely the possibility that he has a nuclear warhead gestating or even actualized.

Understandably, curiosity about this man has been renewed. We have been told for many years that Kim is obsessively vain. But I had not remembered the September 1997 article from the official government news agency. Reproduced here are the last few sentences of the paean, which serve our purposes. The document concluded: "The general is the mental pillar and the eternal sun to the Korean people. As they are in harmonious whole with him, they are enjoying a true life based on pure conscience and obligation. They are upholding him as their great father and teacher, united around him in ideology, morality, and obligation. So their life is a true, fruitful and precious life without an equal in history."

In North Korea such tributes as these substitute for food, which does not exist, at least not enough to feed the country's 21 million people, ten percent of whom died of starvation in Kim's first half decade in power. It is widely noted that for all that he thinks of himself as a leader with a divine afflatus to bring to his people and the world the fruits of Juche (the North Korean variant of Leninism, with a little Ayn Rand mixed in), he is himself a man of total self-indulgence, devoted to porn, Scotch, and Daffy Duck cartoons. The recounting of details of this kind serves no purpose except as it is helpful in illuminating his special madness. It is that, but observers note that he is expert in the single discipline that matters, which is his ability to stay in absolute command of his country.

President Bush has reiterated his commitment to diplomacy as the instrument to use in the critical days ahead. And the U.S. made strides in the critical two days after the policy of sanctions was announced.

There is no way, however, in which Mr. Bush can undo the sentiment he expressed to Bob Woodward four years ago: "I loathe Kim Jong Il. I've got a visceral reaction to this guy, because he is starving his people. And I have seen intelligence of these prison camps—they are huge—that he uses to break up families and to torture people. It appalls me." Such sentiments don't do much to enhance diplomacy. Inevitably they remind us, by contrast, of the oleaginous references to Stalin and Hitler and Mao Tse-tung by yesterday's diplomats on the make. But even if Mr. Bush reproduced his words on a calling card to distribute among diplomats bound for Pyongyang, this would surely not affect the man who sees himself as the mental pillar and the eternal sun to the Korean people.

The proposed sanctions could hypothetically immobilize Kim. You can reduce the need for food by depriving incremental millions of it, but a million-man army needs fuel. Unfortunately, there isn't any way to seal the border to the north, sufficiently to block extra fuel from passing through the long frontier North Korea shares with China. China has a special consideration here. The pressure of masses of North Koreans who want food and stability creates a huge problem, so much so that the Chinese worry more about instability in the Korean peninsula than about nuclear bombs dispatched from Pyongyang.

The diplomatic ideal, where China is concerned, is to mount sufficient pressure to influence Kim's behavior, but not so much as to threaten his hegemony. The final formulation of Peking's collaboration will be critical, and the challenge in Washington is to egg it on to ensure that Dear Leader will recognize that he has gone one step too far.

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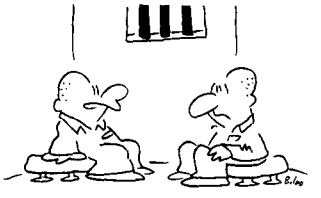

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happy warrior

MARK STEYN

Jes' Driftin' Along . . .

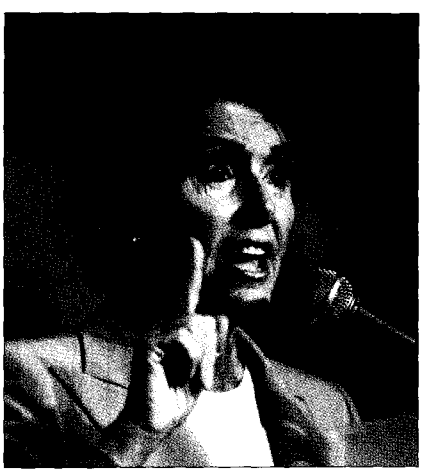
To be honest, the election campaign has felt a bit like an out-of-body experience, or an out-of-body-politic experience. I've never been terribly partial to that Bertolt Brecht line about how it's time to elect a new people. Nevertheless, as Donald Rumsfeld might say, you go to the polls with the electorate you have. And, if this electorate decides to anoint the Democratic party of Nancy Pelosi, Harry Reid, and Howard Dean, that's their prerogative.

And, if that comes to pass, Republicans should at least be grown-up enough not to take refuge in what seems to be a fast metastasizing Comforting Delusion of the Month—that if the Dems do happen to take Congress, in 2008 voters will be so disgusted after two years of Speaker Pelosi et al. there'll be a GOP landslide. I doubt it. If Democrats win even one chamber in '06, it will position them very well for both—plus the White House—in '08. Unless, of course, Des Moines is wiped out in a nuclear strike, and Nancy says this proves we need to get a really strong resolution in the Security Council, and that causes a decisive point-oh-oh-oh-oh-whatever swing to the Republicans in a tight Senate race in South Dakota and a critical House seat in Georgia.

But let's not move on to the new Comforting Delusion of the Month too early.

For what it's worth, I don't reckon the Dems will win. The wild gains predicted for the party in November are just the usual self-insulating Democrat-media bubble bolstered by the usual dodgy polling and an even more pathetic than usual pseudo-scandal in La Cage au Foley. Republicans are a tough sell, in part because no party's gone three-for-three with their man in the White House since FDR—and he had a much bigger margin of error: The difference between then and now is that, in 1937, 17 wasn't the age of Mark Foley's pen pal but the number of Republican senators. Today, in a much more finely poised electoral landscape, any slippage by the majority party in this or that corner of the map is a potential loss nationally. Nonetheless, I would still bet on Republicans' clinging to power on the Wednesday morning after a nail-biting night before.

The question then arises: Why is it this close? We live in times of plenty. Possibly you disagree with that: You scoff that it's a "jobless recovery," or that gas is not yet below two bucks a gallon again. The rest of the world should have America's problems. Unemployment in the U.S. is about 4.5 percent, which means Dee Dee's taking a week off between quitting at Bud's Grill and starting at the hair salon. In the Euro-zone, it's twice that, and France and Germany get excited if it dips below double digits. As for filling up your car, gas has just plummeted to $5.63 per gallon in France, $5.86 in Germany, and $6.18 in Britain. Which is why, when Americans are shown to their rental vehicle at Charles de Gaulle Airport, they don't understand why the parking lot's full of what appear to be slightly oversized cupholders. So, if you're upset about unemployment and high gas prices, it doesn't make a lot of sense to vote for a party whose broad disposition is that we need to be more like Europe.



Her Presumptiveness

KEVIN LAMARQUE/REUTERS

But logic isn't at play here. Just after 9/11, I wrote somewhere that one should never underestimate the seductive power of inertia in world affairs. There is a big constituency—perhaps even a majority—for jes' driftin' along, for cruising down the river on a Sunday afternoon, even if you know it's the Niagara River and that faint whooshing sound seems to be getting a whole lot louder—as it is not just in foreign policy but on a whole raft of other issues, including Social Security. The Democrats make a much better drift-along party than the GOP, because so many other forces in the world—the media, the U.N., Jacques Chirac—all seem to be drifting in the same direction. Look at the nearest we've got to a specific campaign pledge from Speaker-presumptive Pelosi. In her "first hundred hours," she's pledged that she'll enact every single last proposal by the 9/11 Commission. Why? She's elected as a legislator in order to legislate, isn't she? Doesn't she have any ideas of her own? Apparently not. What His Holiness the Pontiff Thomas Kean says is infallible and all must accept it as such.

You know, I'm betting that if you asked Mrs. Pelosi to name the five most urgently needed 9/11 Commission proposals that had not yet been enacted, she wouldn't be able to. This is essentially intellectual outsourcing—or, as Madam Speaker would put it, "As a mother and a grandmother, I'm very concerned about safety. In fact, I'm too busy expressing my concerns about it to do anything about it." Saying we need to work through the U.N. more on Darfur, and with our European "allies" on Iran, and that we need to send Jimmy Carter and Madeleine Albright out to Pyongyang to sign a bilateral agreement pledging massive U.S. investment in Kim Jong Il's nuclear-powered leisurewear plant, these are all also forms of outsourcing: Let's fly somewhere, hold some meetings, sign some agreements, do nothing.

I don't think this is a time for inertia. To govern is to choose—not to choose to outsource everything to U.N. civil servants and French presidents and former governors of New Jersey, but to choose for yourself, from difficult options that aren't going to get easier by kicking them Clinton-style down the road a ways. Mrs. Pelosi's party likes to boast that it's pro-choice. In that case, how about making some of the tough ones? **NR**

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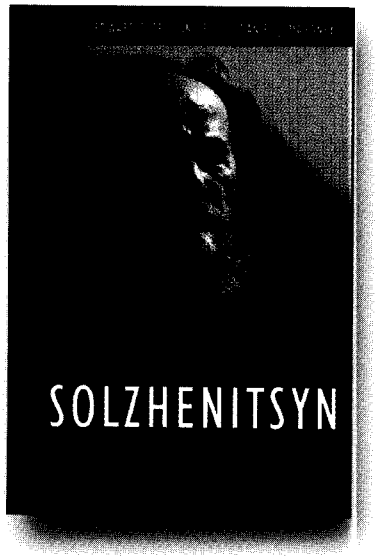

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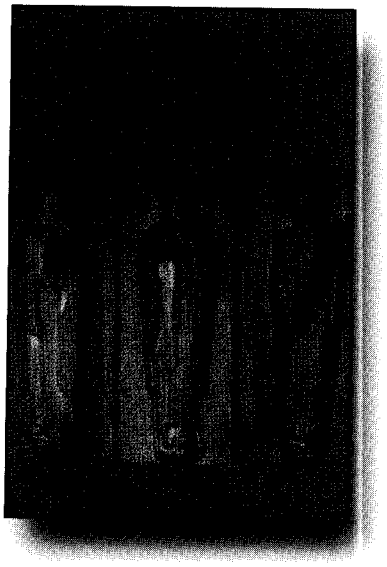

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